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A. ESME COLLINGS

MRS. GEOFFREY SELBY-LOWNES.

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**COUNTRY LIFE**  
The Journal for all interested in  
Country Life and Country Pursuits

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## EDITORIAL NOTICE.

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## PUBLIC OPINION . . . . . AND THE PRESS.

**F**EW things give the thoughtful a more fruitful text for meditation at the present time than the influence of the cheap Press. It is a peculiar product of our times. There are many people still living who remember when there was a tax on newspapers, and they were the exclusive privilege of the rich and well-to-do. The poor were poorer then, and though it is going back past memory we can well imagine how after the Battle of Waterloo they were glad to beg or borrow a newspaper several weeks old. Artists both in paint and ink have left us pictures of a better-educated yokel reading aloud the news to a crowd of friends. In those days opinion must have been formed very unlike the manner in which it is made now, but we are not sure that it was not sounder in the end. The educated few were first appealed to, and they spread their views around them, even as a stone dropped in a pool sends out a wavelet in an expanding circle. At any rate, it may well be questioned if there were so many grievous misjudgments as occur with us day and daily. We may take the case of books as illustrative of our point. Before a book became possible it had to pass the judgment of the select few who, in the main, seem to have been able to form a tolerably just idea of its merits. To-day the maker and publisher of books go past the educated opinion and appeal directly to the masses, with the result that such rubbish as would have appeared to our forefathers to be inconceivable, now makes the fortune of the author and his publisher, and is acclaimed as an emanation of genius. In fact, one can scarcely take up any newspaper with reviews in

it without coming across such phrases as "*chef d'œuvre*," "masterpiece," or "work of art" applied in most cases to the merest twaddle.

It has been said, with a scoff that is not entirely wanting in truth, that those who quote from the, so-called, works of genius can always be reckoned on to select for praise the very worst passages. As far as literary judgment and taste are concerned, the first effect of the cheapening of newspapers—accompanied, as it has been, by the extension of a popular and superficial system of education—has been disastrous. We do not say it is hopeless, because education in the best sense must go on in spite of our bad system, and, if bad books are widely read, there will always be a remnant to recognise badness and ask for work of higher quality. Thus in due course there will again be formed a creditable body of public opinion in England that will secure a proper welcome for those who are able and willing to appeal to it.

Similarly, we are not inclined to take an altogether pessimistic view of the effects produced by the cheap Press. It is no doubt unscrupulously handled. Those who, in their own phraseology, "run" these papers scarcely profess to have any honest convictions of their own, but in the most open and cynical manner try to follow while they flatter the crowd. Previously those in a similar position did not openly avow that their sole and only purpose was that of making pecuniary profit. In many cases that might be at bottom their motive, but they had the grace to profess a certain belief in the dignity of letters, and in honesty of their patriotism or devotion to a cause. The worst of them made a show of carrying on their newspaper business with a view to the propagation of what they considered to be sound ideas, and with a desire to educate and advise as well as amuse the public. It was somewhat rashly concluded when the modern style of newspaper proprietor came into existence that he would debase and corrupt public opinion. It is not only that the views expressed by the paper are, so to speak, made to order, but in very many there is no such thing known as honest reporting. Nearly everything that appears is coloured to suit the interests of the proprietor. Opinion is added if it is a question of opinion. The strokes are deepened and the facts accentuated and exaggerated if the purpose is to produce a sensation, as it is every time the thing is published, and, altogether, the production is absolutely untrustworthy. But here, again, we learn the truth of the old adage that honesty is the best policy. People have not been slow to realise that a phrase equivalent to "made in Germany" is as good a description as can be applied to these intellectual goods, and for some time past there has been noticeable a marked rebound from the first glories of their acclamation. The salient feature just now is that newspapers which claim to circulate not by thousands but by millions exercise no influence whatever upon public opinion, and, in fact, the whole body of journalism in Great Britain has been injured as far as its influence goes. Time was when a "leader" in our most prominent journal could shake a Ministry or cause a measure to be rejected in the House of Commons. To-day the ablest writing of the ablest man in the Press seems to produce no effect whatever. Nobody seems to take what is written to heart. It appears to be considered that the writer is no better than a lawyer arguing from a brief, and the manner in which opinion is formed remains something of a mystery. It may be that when a man of, say, Mr. Chamberlain's strong personality takes an idea into his head he is much more able to impress it than all the newspapers put together. There was a time when every word of Lord Rosebery's was listened to with the respect paid to one who was entitled to mould public opinion, and various other examples could be cited in which the nation, as a whole, seemed to turn an ear of the utmost docility to the commanding voice addressing it at the moment. But this attitude is by no means extended to any of the newspapers of to-day, least of all to that smaller fry which is at once so loud, pretentious, and futile. It speaks well for the general intellectual health of the country that this is so, because it proves that under all the outward show of extravagance and frivolity there is a deeper vein of sound common-sense that rejects the advice given by the hireling who is paid to say what he does say, and to whom no choice of opinion is vouchsafed. Carlyle used to hold that the Press was the true pulpit of modern life, and that it had more influence than all the preachers put together; but then that influence entirely depends upon the conduct and self-respect of those who wield it. Out of the present chaos it may be that there shall be evolved a stronger, better, and more honest method of propagating opinion than any that is in existence at present.

## Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Mrs. Geoffrey Selby-Lowndes of Bletchley Lodge, Bletchley. Mrs. Selby-Lowndes is the daughter of Mr. William Selby-Lowndes, Master of the Whaddon Chase Foxhounds.



**W**HILE the South African War was going on we learnt what the difficulties were of obtaining accurate and prompt information, even though the operations were wholly conducted on land. It is no wonder, therefore, that news from the Far East is vague and uncertain. Both combatants would naturally take every possible precaution against the despatch of news to Europe, since whatever comes over the cable could return in the same way. A strict censorship is only what might fairly be expected. However, the information that is at hand is sufficient to enable us to form a fair estimate of what goes on. Japan, in spite of the smallness of her territory, has several advantages in this encounter. She was ready for it and her people were keen. Of Russia almost the opposite may be said. The way in which her navy has already been mauled shows that the events which have occurred were not anticipated by her, and from the Muscovite point of view the worst feature in the situation is the apathy of the people. They do not understand the cause for which fighting is being carried on in the Far East. They have no moral enthusiasm to bring to the support of the Czar, and, it is said, read even the accounts of battles with a look of dull vacancy in their faces. Along with that intelligence come rumours of secret societies growing as active as forces within a crater of a volcano, so that the Russian Government has to deal not only with an active, vigilant, alert enemy, but with the menace of a social revolution at home.

As far as we know at the time of going to press, the salient facts of the war are that several of the best Russian ships have been put out of action, that a landing has been effected by a Japanese military force, and that attempts are being made constantly to blow up the Manchurian Railway. Expert judges are of opinion that we shall not know much more for some time to come. The two navies are not likely to come into conflict, and in these days military operations on land require both time and secrecy for their effective organisation. No doubt the Japanese have formed very clear and definite plans, while, as far as can be seen, the Russians are slowly lumbering up to the defence; but some weeks must certainly elapse before any action of a decisive nature takes place. In the meantime, there will be, no doubt, many minor encounters, both by land and sea, and the war will be unlike many others that have taken place before it, if there be no mishaps on either side, which, however, need not be taken too seriously.

Among the changes necessitated by the new scheme of Army Reform is one that has called forth general regret. Of course, it was not to be expected that Lord Roberts at his age, and suffering as he is at the present moment from the effects of a slight attack of pleurisy, would take a leading hand in the changes which the new Council will at once bring into operation. He has, therefore, retired from the War Office, although we are informed that at the express wish of the Prime Minister he has consented to give the Government the benefit of his advice for some time to come. While sorry that the career of the great soldier is thus being brought to a termination, we cannot but think that the best thing has been done. Lord Roberts in the field won and deserved the admiration of all, but, though laborious to a degree, he never shone conspicuously inside the War Office; and, at any rate, if ever any man earned a period of rest after a strenuous career, it is he whom the soldiers lovingly call "Bobs."

Simultaneously with the retirement of Lord Roberts it is announced that the Duke of Connaught has been appointed to the new post of Inspector-General of the Forces. In many people there is a certain prejudice against Princes who are placed in positions of great authority, the tendency being to suppose that their advancement is due much more to their blood than to

their merit, but in this case such a supposition would be entirely wrong. In the opinion of soldiers the Duke of Connaught is a most able and assiduous student of military science. He proved it conspicuously on Salisbury Plain some years ago, when he succeeded in completely out-maneuvring one of our ablest generals, and in the Soudan he served with distinguished success. As far as it is possible to judge, he is as good a choice as could have been made for the very important post of Inspector-General, and we trust and believe that he will not disappoint expectation in it.

The marriage of the Duke of Norfolk is an event of almost Royal significance. He is the premier Duke in the British peerage, and has inherited many privileges that make him stand out from the rest of the peers. As Earl Marshal he takes a leading place in all great national ceremonials, and he also holds the hereditary position of Chamberlain. The Duke of Norfolk's title goes back to the time of Richard III., and it will be generally hoped that his marriage with his cousin will be a happy and fruitful one, for not only does the Duke hold by inheritance a great position, but as a man he is entitled to the love and respect of his countrymen. Disdaining much of the outward show of rank, he nevertheless has discharged its duties with a thoroughness that commoners might emulate. He was a first-rate Postmaster-General, and has done yeoman service in Local Government affairs, while the duties of private life have been discharged in a way to win him golden opinions from all sorts of people.

#### WORK.

Six days of work, and comes the Sabbath sweet,  
That lends the goodly thought of earned repose;  
Six days of driving brain, or driven feet,  
And all the tiredness goes.

And then shall come still airs, the quiet lane,  
The broad fields of the winter morning sky;  
And, it may be, for some to hear again  
God's footsteps passing by.

Work is the measure of these lovely things;  
As work is sure salvation to the heart—  
No grief, however fierce, destruction brings  
When labour bears its part.

LILIAN STREET.

It would be against our rules to comment on the fiscal debate which ended on Monday night in the House of Commons, giving the Government a majority of fifty-one votes, but the occasion was memorable in several respects. We cannot at the moment remember a precedent for the absence of the chief persons during the discussion of what was practically a vote of censure. The subject undoubtedly was raised by Mr. Chamberlain. It was he that was upon his trial, but weariness, and we are afraid something approaching illness, had compelled him to seek a holiday, so that the country was robbed of the opportunity of hearing his defence. His colleague, the Prime Minister, was responsible for an attenuated version of the same political programme, but unfortunately he too was precluded by illness from taking part in the debate. All parties unite in regretting the unavoidable absence of Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain, and in wishing both of them a speedy return to health and strength. In the case of Mr. Balfour that hope seems in a promising way to be fulfilled. At the moment of writing he is staying at Brighton, and report says that he is very much better; in fact, he has sent for his favourite implements, and if all goes well will probably be able to appear on the golf links very shortly. As it is quite certain that the fiscal problem will be raised in another form before the session is much older, no great harm will have resulted from his absence.

It is said that there is no smoke without fire; but we should be extremely sorry to learn that there is any real ground for the alarmist rumours that have been current about the Emperor of Germany. The mere fact that he had an operation performed some little time ago, coupled with the memory of the manner in which his father and mother died, is sufficient to make people suspect that something may be seriously wrong with his throat; but, as far as we can learn from the most authentic sources in Berlin, the current rumours have had no real foundation. The Emperor has been appearing in public and performing his duties in a manner that leaves those about him in no doubt about his health. It would certainly be a very great misfortune to Europe if anything should happen to the Kaiser at this juncture. He is one of the strongest men in public affairs to-day, and, so far, his influence has been exerted in the cause of peace. Nor is there any real reason to believe, what, nevertheless, many people

profess, that his designs for the future included a war with this country. It would be foolish on our part to ignore the growth of a certain hostility on the part of the Germans, but it has no corresponding feeling in this country, and under wise guidance may possibly pass away without any serious result.

It is always well to get as near as we possibly can to the facts, especially when loud complaints are heard. The outcry about the number of unemployed just now is particularly serious, and it is a relief to turn to the memorandum issued by the Board of Trade, and to find that in reality the proportion of people out of work is not much beyond the normal. In every industrial country there must be a certain number of people who get out of employment, and the whole history of trade shows a flux and reflux, a period of activity alternating with a period of depression. At present we are in the latter condition, and whoever remembers any of the similar periods of the past will know that we have reason to be glad that things are not worse than they are. It is calculated from the returns made by the Trades Unions that about 6·6 per cent. of the workmen were reported as unemployed at the end of January, as compared with 6·7 per cent. in December, and with 5·1 per cent. in January, 1903. We do not say that it is satisfactory to find that six people out of every hundred are out of work, but the case might have been very much worse, as it undoubtedly was in 1879 and two or three years following that. If we get through the depression without any greater hardship, it will be one of the lightest we have known.

It is rather surprising that none of those who are arguing in favour of the importation of Chinese labour for the mines in the Transvaal have made a point of the fact of our alliance with Japan. The truth is that the events of the last few years have taught us to have a very different estimate of the Japanese and the Chinese respectively, but within a comparatively recent date it is certain that the two nations were very similarly regarded by Western thought, and it seems a little paradoxical that while we are in close alliance with one of the yellow races the introduction of labourers of either of these races, even under the most stringent restrictions, should be regarded as a positive calamity in some portions of the Empire where a supply of cheap labour is almost necessary to their salvation.

A curious illustration of the general estimate of the relative importance of things was unconsciously given by the reception on the same day of the news that the Japanese torpedo-boats had virtually put out of fighting gear three Russian battle-ships, and that Warner's team in Australia had got their opponents all out in the second innings for fifteen runs. The comments of "the man in the street" and in the clubs were fairly equally divided between these two topics, of which the interest and importance are not, perhaps, quite equal when seriously considered, especially as the incidents of the naval action were the first beginnings of the war in the Far East. Had fieldsmen accepted all chances given, it seems as if the Australian incidents might have been such as to exercise an even stronger hold on the interest of "the man in the street," for Trott, who made nine out of the grand total, was missed at slip before he had made a run, and Baker, second highest scorer with three, was given a life at the wicket, although Strudwick had his revenge by stumping him a few balls later. Deducting the twelve runs thus presented to the Australian side, their total would have been three—two runs from the bat and one "extra." The value of the bowling performance to the British side should lie in the confidence it cannot fail to give them in the next test match.

Cambridge, as a rule, has been inclined to envy Oxford her possession of a better and a bigger river, but the experience of the present term at Oxford illustrates the trite truth that you may have too much of a good thing. There has been too much of a river at Oxford, so the eight, after vainly seeking suitable practice water at Medley, moved on to Henley, and even there it was impossible to "coach," except from a launch, in consequence of a flooded towing-path. It is suggested that the eight will stay on at Henley, unless they move to Bourne End, until they are due at Putney for the final stages of practice. But possibly this may not accord with the views of some who may conceive that the University course should include reading as well as rowing. The question may be asked, however, whether men do read when they are training for the 'Varsity Boat Race.

Utterly disastrous though the persistently wet weather of the past many months has been for almost every rural occupation or interest, it has at least had an effect not altogether bad upon the health of the nation as a whole. The figures issued by

the Registrar-General show that last year's death-rate was the lowest for very many years, and many considerations make it tolerably certain that we have here an instance of true cause and effect, and no mere coincidence. The absence both of severe frosts and great heat makes the year's weather far less trying to the feeble and sickly, and the benefit to the dwellers in great cities from the perpetual cleansing of roofs and streets is beyond doubt very great. But where the townsmen get the gain, the result for the country dwellers is a sad one indeed. In any case, the farmer who sees the wet weather destroying his living can hardly be expected to derive much satisfaction from the notion that it may tend to prolong his life.

Some interesting investigations into the formation of pearls have been carried on by Mr. Hornell, the biologist in charge of the Marine Laboratory at Galle in Ceylon, with a view to increasing their production by a system of culture. Mr. Hornell now believes he has discovered every stage in the life of the parasite in the oyster which sets up the irritation to which the formation of the pearl is due. Like many other organisms, it has different involuntary hosts at different stages of its growth, and for its full development requires to be removed into the interior of the "trigger fish," or balistes. This necessary transference is effected by the balistes swallowing it, together with the oyster, its natural prey. But pearls are caused by the death of individual parasites while still quartered upon the oyster, and the notion is, by cultivating the balistes and the oyster together in salt-water enclosures, to increase the numbers of the parasites, and so, presumptively, the proportion of them that meet an untimely death and are sealed up in the heart of the gem.

#### THE LOWLAND PLOUGHMAN.

The team is stabled up, my lass  
The dew lies thick and grey;  
Beyond the world, the long green light  
Clings to the edge of day.

By farm and fold the work is still,  
Their breath the beanflowers yield,  
And, in the dusk, the gowans stand  
Like moons along the field.

A little ghost alone, my dear,  
The night moth flitters by,  
Beside the hedge I'm lonely too,  
Although no ghost am I.

Leave the gudeman to mind the hearth,  
The wife to mend the fire,  
Nor heed the lads whose voices come  
In mirth from barn and byre.

The evening star is up, my dear,  
And oh! the night is sweet,  
Come through the heavy drops that beat  
The grasses at your feet.

For I am young and I am strong,  
And well can work for two,  
And 'tis a year, come Martinmas,  
I've loved no lass but you.

And in a year, come Martinmas,  
Before the fields are sown,  
I will not need to walk nor stray  
Between the lights alone.

For then the cot beyond the farm  
A happy man will hold,  
A wife who wears a golden ring  
To match her hair of gold.

JANE COX.

Tobacco-growing was successfully conducted in this country before it was suppressed by the Government in the interests of the revenue, though never to any very large extent, and it will be interesting to see what is the commercial result of the experiments in raising this crop which the Government is now about to carry out in Ireland. The difficulties which Irish tobacco-growers will have to face at the outset are to be lessened by a reduction of one-third of the existing duty, and with this aid there seems good reason to hope that the production of a marketable quality of leaf will not be at all impossible. If tobacco is a regular crop in parts of Germany and Belgium, it should certainly not prove impossible to grow it in the Irish climate. But the chief difficulty may very probably be to grow a class of leaf of the same kind as that which supplies the English market. The taste for Belgian or German pipe tobacco, at any rate, is one which has to be acquired with pains by most English smokers.

The perpetual rain has made the present winter and past autumn rather bad seasons for work in the garden, but they seem to have favoured some of the wild floral things greatly. We do not

remember ever to have seen the wild strawberry plants so vigorous and plentiful. Primroses have been in bloom almost, if not quite, without a break in the southern counties of England. All the ferns, naturally, have done well, rejoicing in the abundant moisture. Valentine's Day, too, found the birds well forward with their matrimonial arrangements. The pairing of very many kinds seems to have taken place, and many have been already busy about the selection of "eligible building sites," even if the construction of nests has not actually begun.

An unusual advertisement is at the present time being week after week inserted in a Worcester journal: "Mole-skins wanted; fine quality, full-seasoned, freshly-caught moles; best prices paid; open for any quantities." Dame Fashion has decreed that mole-skins shall be the favourite fur, and the "old mole-catcher" must reap the advantage if he can be found. He seems at present a very "rare bird," indeed, almost as extinct as the moa. Just now the valley of Evesham and the low-lying land extending thence to Oxford is one vast lake from the extensive floods; but the writer, travelling from London to Worcester a month since, was amazed at the enormous quantities of mole-heaps all over this now submerged tract. The pasture fields were literally riddled by them, and this farmers' pest, it was evident, instead of being exterminated by the demand for the skins which has prevailed during the last two or three years, has increased and multiplied to an alarming degree. The wet seasons invariably result in more "oonts," as they are called by the country-folk. They are

thirsty creatures, and must drink once a day at least, and when the supply of water is large the moles thrive. It would be interesting to discover whether many had been drowned in the floods, or whether they emigrated before their advance.

It has been discovered by the engineers who are occupied with the maintenance of the Suez Canal that the best of all methods of protecting the banks from crumbling and decay is provided by the natural growth of reeds which fringe the channel for some distance below Ismailia on the African side, and some rather interesting attempts have been lately made to plant new beds in other parts of the canal. It is stated that the local species of reed with which the experiment has been so far made will not live in salt or very brackish water in the early stages of its growth, though it will bear transplantation later, and that at present the serviceableness of the natural means of protection is consequently limited. Where the water is sufficiently free from brine, however, the network of roots is found to put a facing on the loose soil of the banks more successful and permanent than a wall of brick or stone, and it would probably not be difficult to discover and establish some coarse sedge or other plant of the sea-marshes. It would perform the same service in preventing the loose soil encroaching beyond its limits that has been accomplished on many tracts of shifting sandhill by the marram-grasses and fir-scrub which have generally spread, and readily, after their first successful introduction.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPUR.

**I**T may be presumed that man at a very early period of the world's history, as soon, indeed, as he had learned to make a horse carry him, conceived the idea that it would be excessively convenient if he could fix some sort of goad to his feet, wherewith he might urge on the animal, and at the same time leave both hands free for its guidance, and for offensive and defensive purposes. Having conceived this idea, the most obvious way of putting it into execution was to devise

some sort of arrangement possessing two arms which should embrace the heel, and which should have a sharp point projecting posteriorly, and to bind this arrangement to his foot with a leather thong—an arrangement found to be so admirably adapted to the purpose for which it was intended that it has existed to the present day unaltered, save in detail. It is my intention

to endeavour to trace these changes of detail—details of form, of size, and of ornament, changes sometimes brought about by alterations of armour, or of shape of saddles, and sometimes apparently dictated by sheer caprice—to trace these various changes from the simplest form of spike bound round the foot, of the Roman period, up to the enormous and elaborately ornamented spurs of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and down again to the comparatively simple form of the present day.

In the earliest times it is probable that spurs were looked upon, just as they are now, merely as useful appliances for encouraging a horse to carry out the wishes of his rider, and when they were not being employed for that purpose, they were laid aside, and no more thought of till the rider mounted his horse again. It was reserved for the Middle Ages to invest the spur with a romantic and emblematical value, which in a great measure led to its extreme elaboration during that period. I am aware that some distinguished antiquarians consider this idea to be much exaggerated, and think that the spur, even in the Middle Ages, had no more than its practical value. In support of this idea Chaucer may be quoted in his prologue to the "Canterbury Tales," written about A.D. 1370, a period when the spur was beginning to be highly elaborated. Chaucer, when describing the Pilgrims on their way to Canterbury, makes no mention of spurs when describing the Knight, but in describing the "Good Wif" he says:

"Upon her amblere easily she sat,  
A foot-mantel upon her hippes wide,  
And on her feet a paire of spores sharpe."



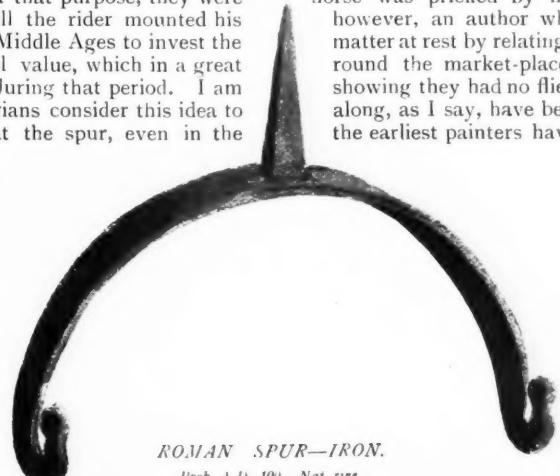
THE EARLIEST SPUR KNOWN.

Prob. 300-100 B.C.



GERMAN.

Prob. A.D. 200-300.



ROMAN SPUR—IRON.

Prob. A.D. 100. Nat. size.

that the Eastern nations have always preferred to attach their goad to the stirrup rather than to the foot, and numerous examples can be seen at the present day of the inner corners of the broad foot-plate of the Eastern stirrup being prolonged into a spike, which can be easily applied to the horse's side. Homer, though he gives most elaborate descriptions of arms and armour, does not, I think, ever mention spurs, although it is difficult to believe that they were not invented in his time. Zenophon, and other writers of his day, mention them, using the word *μυωψι* (literally a horse-fly). And these authors use the word in so doubtful a sense as to render it an open question whether the horse was pricked by his rider or by a fly. Theophrastus,

however, an author who flourished about 320 B.C., sets the matter at rest by relating how, after a combat, the victors walked round the market-place *ἐπ τοῖς μυωψι* (in their spurs), thus showing they had no flies on them, but real spurs. Writers all along, as I say, have been curiously reticent upon the subject; the earliest painters have, as a rule, shirked the spurs in their pictures of ancient battles; the engravers of ancient brasses in our churches have, with but few exceptions, done the same. Consequently, too little is known at the present day of this interesting subject, as is evinced by our seeing too frequently in our armouries and public collections of armour spurs arranged upside down (a very common mistake with spurs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries), and where spurs are attached to complete suits of armour they are often of quite a different period, or are palpable forgeries, or are attached in

a manner not in vogue at the period. It is probable that the earliest spurs were made of hard wood, or of bone, or a combination of both, and bound to the foot by leather thongs; but of these, naturally, no examples remain. The earliest metal spurs now in existence, made both of iron and of bronze, are illustrated in Zchille and Forrer's work on the subject, taken from specimens which I believe exist in German collections.

It is interesting to observe that the arrangement at the ends of the sides for the attachment of the strap is in these early spurs of precisely the same form as that of the present day, a mushroom-shaped or button-like arrangement on which the straps could be buttoned by a slit in the leather. These spurs are believed to date from about a century before to a century after the Christian era.

In the British Museum there is an iron spur which was dug up by Dr. Behr from a grave in Livonia, and believed to be of about the first century A.D. Here the sides end by being turned up to form a sort of hook, through which a strap could pass under the sole and over the instep. In none of these early spurs are the sides prolonged anteriorly anything like so far as they were at a later period; there was no neck, and the spike, or "prick," was rarely more than an inch in length. This form of spur probably went on for several hundred years with but little alteration, save that the button-like arrangement for the attachment of the strap disappeared, not to be resumed again till quite modern times. Then gradually, as the skill of artificers in metal improved, elaborations began,

some ornamentation was introduced, and the spike got prolonged, as shown in one of our illustrations, also taken from Zchille's work.

Here the button-shaped arrangement is retained, but one sees the commencement of the neck, which afterwards grew to enormous proportions, and the development of a crest at the top of the heel-plate. The date of this spur is believed to be about A.D. 500. This prolongation of the spike went on increasing until it became a formidable weapon, 4in. or 5in. long, with no guard to prevent it penetrating a horse's side to its full extent, and when this form came into universal use people doubtless found that horses often

got very seriously injured. This led to the adoption of the broad, cone-shaped head, which came into vogue soon after the Norman Conquest. Very good examples of these cone-shaped "prick" spurs are to be seen on the effigies on the tombs of Knights Templars in the Temple Church. These, though extending over a period of 100 years, from A.D. 1144 to 1241, show but little alteration. They all have the depressed sides, formed to curve under the ankle-bone, an arrangement which continued in vogue for nearly 500 years, and the sides greatly prolonged forward, so as to come towards the front of the instep, and terminating by being turned over on themselves, to form a loop through which one strap passed round the foot, and was fastened by an ordinary buckle. There are numerous examples of these prick spurs in our museums, especially in the City of London Museum, attached to the Guildhall, and doubtless there are some in private collections. We have also numerous



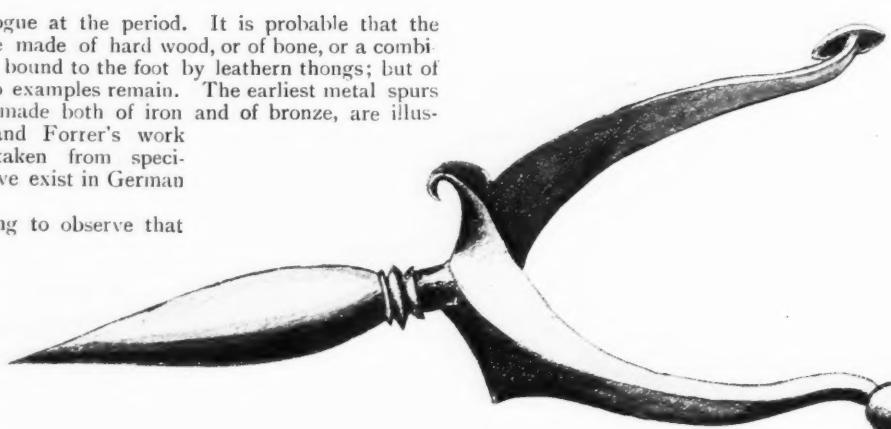
GERMAN.

Prob. A.D. 600. Halfsize.



A KNIGHT TEMPLAR'S SPUR.

A.D. 1219.



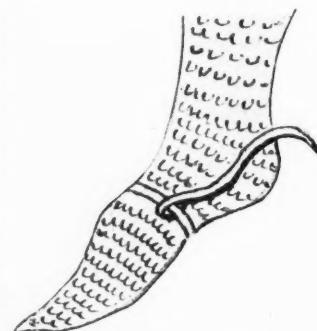
IRON SPUR, PROBABLY GERMAN.

A.D. 300-500.

examples engraved on brasses in churches throughout the country; but these must be taken with some allowance for the taste and fancy of the artist. For instance, there exists on several brasses a curious curved line over the spur, looking much like a sort of covering to it, projecting from the heel of the warrior, which gave rise to much conjecture on the

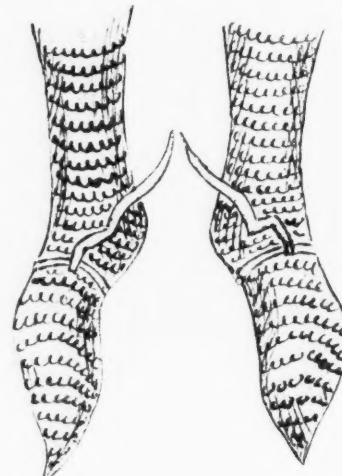
part of antiquarians, but which was at length decided to be merely an attempt at shading on the part of the artist, and not to represent any structure. Still, these brasses more or less faithfully show many of the characteristics of the period—the depressed sides, prolonged forward, and the terminal loops, as may be seen in the brass of William de Longspee in Salisbury Cathedral, A.D. 1227, and that of Sir John d'Abernon in Stoke d'Abernon Church, A.D. 1277. In all these brasses there is no suggestion of the cone-shaped head, which was certainly in use at the time. These and many other brasses are also interesting as throwing great light on the date of the transition period between the prick and the rowel spur, as to the development of which I hope at some future time to give some illustrations.

C. DE LACY LACY.



FROM BRASS OF WILLIAM DE LONGSPEE.

A.D. 1227.



FROM BRASS OF SIR JOHN D'ABERNON.

A.D. 1277.

has there been such a record run of salmon, and never before has such an enormous quantity been seen in the river. It is no exaggeration to say that hundreds are to be counted within a short space of time—most of them trying

their utmost to clamber up the cauld into the still waters above. To watch them in their endeavours to surmount the weirs on the different beats of the river is a sight not easily or willingly forgotten. One after another—often dozens at a time—do they bore their way halfway up, only to be thrown back by the force of the water or by the lowness of it. Again they try, and yet again, and when one manages to get over, a sigh of relief and gladness seems to go through the throng of spectators, who are worked up to a state of excitement with seeing the fish washed back so often. People from far and near are to be seen lining the river banks; and on a recent Sunday the scene at Melrose was more like a village fair than the quiet, sequestered banks of the river Tweed.

"There should be some ground fishin' the year, baith for the 'toff' and the poacher," went on the old villager, and should the

## A RECORD SALMON RUN.

**G**OOSH! I never saw the like o' it before." Such was the remark the writer heard an old village worthy pass to his neighbour the other day down by the banks of the river Tweed, near Melrose—the old abbey town on the Borders. The men were, with others of their kin, watching the salmon trying to "loup" the "cauld," or weir, which crosses the river there, and truly such a sight has seldom, if ever, been seen on the Tweed. Not within the memory of the oldest inhabitant of the small towns and hamlets which lie along the river banks

their utmost to clamber up the cauld into the still waters above. To watch them in their endeavours to surmount the weirs on the different beats of the river is a sight not easily or willingly forgotten. One after another—often dozens at a time—do they bore their way halfway up, only to be thrown back by the force of the water or by the lowness of it. Again they try, and yet again, and when one manages to get over, a sigh of relief and gladness seems to go through the throng of spectators, who are worked up to a state of excitement with seeing the fish washed back so often. People from far and near are to be seen lining the river banks; and on a recent Sunday the scene at Melrose was more like a village fair than the quiet, sequestered banks of the river Tweed.

"There should be some ground fishin' the year, baith for the 'toff' and the poacher," went on the old villager, and should the

result of the latter's "catch" be any guide to that of the legitimate fisher and sportsman, the season just opened—notwithstanding the number of kelts in the river—should show a record bag. There is, as usual, at this period of the year, some "fungoid" fish, but, considering the quantity in the river, this dreadful disease does not seem to be very plentiful; in fact, the writer, though at the river a good deal, has only come across a very limited number of fish bearing marks of this disease.

"Yon anes are no fear'd, onywey," again from the old fellow, and looking in the direction to which he pointed, I was much surprised to see two men, in open daylight, and although a large crowd of people were looking on, taking salmon from the river by means of a "cleek." This instrument consists of a large hook attached to a long stick, or sometimes to a string at the end of the stick. The poacher walks along the bank till he comes across a fish. He then throws the line into the water over the fish, gives the line a sudden jerk, and hooks his prey in the side.

"That's a guid ane they've got this time," and sure enough these men had landed a beautiful salmon, fully 30lb. in weight, in this nefarious manner.

I walked away, disgusted to think that such a fine fish should be killed in so foul a manner. Going round a bend in the river, not more than a couple of hundred yards away, I found two of the district water-bailiffs

sitting complacently on a fence smoking their pipes, oblivious of the tragedy which had just been enacted such a short distance away, and which they were there to prevent. But—so the writer was informed by a police official a short time ago—the bailiffs are practically powerless to put anything like a stop to the poaching which is at present being carried out. These poachers are past-masters at their "art." They have a properly constituted club, members of which are set to watch the bailiffs the whole day long, from the time they leave their place of abode until they return. Spies are set along the line, and on the bailiffs' appearance the signal is given one to another, until it reaches the members who have been entrusted with the "honour" (doubtful honour, we should say) of cleeking the fish out of the water. The fish are hawked in the towns for 2d., 3d., and 4d. per pound, and the writer himself has been offered more than once a fine fish from 10lb. to 15lb. for the matter of half-a-crown. The money obtained by this means is put into a common fund, and should any of the members of the "poaching club" happen to get within the arms of the law, the fine—which, as a rule, is no light one—is paid out of this fund, and the sum remaining at the end of the season is divided amongst the members.

However, in spite of all this, the river at present is in good trim, and those who are lucky enough to possess a fishing on the Tweed should be able to look back on "season 1904" as a record year. WAVERLEY.

## FEBRUARY FILLDYKE.



W. Rawlings.

IN CONSTABLE'S COUNTRY.

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**W**HEN the year has turned and shed its first month, there invariably begins to grow in me, and probably in many other people who have not lost their natural instincts, a longing to be out in the open country and among the fields. I have been "long in city pent," and it seems this year to have been longer than ever before. Mariana in the moated grange could not have hated the drip, drip, drip of the rain more than we townsmen have done during the greater part of last year; for the few sunny days seemed to come exactly at those times when it was impossible to get away, and if at any time an arrangement was made to go into the country, down came that terrible rain again with its accompaniment of dark clouds. A more dismal period could not have been spent by anyone. Yet February, eager though it seems to be to vindicate its right to the title bestowed upon it, has furnished one or two days when my favourite exercise of walking in the country was

possible. So clear was it one morning that I actually saw the sun rise—saw the rosy fingers of dawn shoot from a sky that had been starry all night and now was grey with the approaching light; saw the long ribbons of light widen out into clouds that grew rosier every minute, till the sun, a globe of shining silver, seemed to bob up quite suddenly into the sky, whose blushes passed away and left only the ordinary colours of the morning. On that occasion the omen was not favourable, and the everlasting rain returned. Once again the very opposite of this happened. It was a morning so stormy that I regretted having had the temerity to start upon it, only, as luck would have it, the bad weather did not come on so very badly until I was steaming out of London in an express train—steaming, as it afterwards appeared, through endless lakes, with villages and solitary houses and hamlets all lapped by surrounding water. The wind blew from the north, and carried with it showers of sleet, the rawness of which penetrated to the very bone. Yet

towards midday the clouds began to break, the sun shone through rifts in them for a few minutes at a time, and eventually the rain stopped altogether, great masses of cloud parted and rolled away from each other like black retreating armies, and there was left a typical February day—raw, yet bracing; wintry, but not without that premonitory feeling of spring that comes when January passes. And it seemed to be felt by more than humanity. Larks rose from the withered grassland, and mounted, carolling their blithe song, far into the firmament. Till then a certain depression had hung like a pall over my mind, but the lark's song brought back a memory of the words that used to be given for the music, and I found myself repeating with a half smile :

"Tira-lee, Tira-lee, Tira-lee,  
No shoemaker can make boots  
for me,  
Why so, why so, why so?  
Because my heel's as long as  
my toe,  
My toe, my toe, my toe."

In a black coppice that stood on a hillside in the middle of the grassland a wood-pigeon began to coo. There is no time of the year when he, ardent lover that he is, may not be heard; but still it seemed as if he, too, had caught something of the coming of spring, and he reminded me of the legend that says, long, long ago the cushat built on the ground and the partridge in the tree; but the tree nest was destroyed, and a cow put its foot in the nest on the ground, so the birds



W. A. J. Hensler.

*"BARE RUINED QUIRES."*

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the period of rest was drawing to a close. The plantations were dark brown and bare, and down in the valley below me the river was swollen out over the meadows till the very sight of it



W. A. J. Hensler.

*"WOODLAND POOLS."*

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agreed to change. The angry partridge ever afterwards said, when it saw a human being, "Deil tak' ye," but the gentler wood-pigeon, which had seen an Irishman taking a cow out of the field, sang, and sings for ever, "Tak' two coos, Paddy, tak'."

Anyone who studies the onomatopœia of the subject will see that that at any rate meets the sound better than the better-known words first, we believe, used by Gavin Douglas, "I come hidder to woo. I." It is a very curious fact, not only about wood-pigeons, but various other birds, that they end by repeating the note on which they began. Even the cuckoo, especially towards the end of the season, says, "Cuckoo, cuckoo, cuck."

Such, at least, were some of the artless "musings without method" inspired by the February day in the country, and it required something of a philosophic mind to indulge in them, since the conditions were all so unfavourable. The landscape could only be properly described as cold and bleak, and the pastures were grey with withered grass that did not yet show a green spike as token of the growth that should shortly appear. The hedgerows were black, and destitute of a single bud or swelling to signify that

made one shiver. Nevertheless, here and there were signs that Nature was bringing about the annual revolution that appears more wonderful every time it occurs. On the meadows were the first lambs of the year, weak, long-legged, thin-ribbed creatures that nevertheless raced and played with one another with the frolicsomeness and gaiety of youth. A little tit peeping through the hedge showed on his head that exquisite blue which he gets when the mating season is near at hand, and here and there one found that the first daisies of the year were already showing their fair little faces, like the "wee modest crimson tippit flower" that poet Burns a century ago crushed with his ploughshare; indeed, the ploughman, who is no poet, who sees "no splendour in the grass, nor glory in the flower," might have been doing the same thing that very moment, for he and his team, at that slow pace which may be unhastening but certainly is not unresting, were walking to and fro, to and fro, turning up the fresh soil in their march. It is said that the farm labourer is degenerating, but this man's furrow was as straight and clean as any that the most skilful of his forefathers could have drawn, and the smell of the fresh earth was so grateful as to make one envy the mixed flock of rooks and gulls that followed him and scrambled for the worms.

But I always think the surest sign of spring is that pointed out long ago by one who knew Nature as he seemed to know all things: "The rain is over and gone, and the time of the singing of birds is come." But the birds were not singing in any true sense of the term. Towards night some millions of starlings flew over my head, wheeling and circling like an army on parade, now in this form, now in that, sometimes spread across the heavens like a great net, sometimes as though they had received the order to form fours, but doing all things with a precision and elegance that made one wonder who drilled them and taught them evolutions. The clanging rookery, too, came home, whether the many-wintered one led it or not. That, of course, was when the long walk was ending, and the shades of night were beginning to fall, and in the fields the trees stood like sentinels tossing their great arms; and silence and stillness would have fallen on the land but for the extraordinary chatter created by the birds as they retired for the night. Whether they were holding a parliament or gossiping over the events of the day, when they had been spread far and wide over ploughland and pasture, seeking for that livelihood which we all, bird and man, have to obtain somehow, or whether they were quarrelling as to which should have the most comfortable perch, I know not; but even their voices died down at last, and over the landscape brooded night with its mystery.

I remember long, long ago, when a somewhat mischievous boy, I used to go out bat-fowling at night at this season of the year with a companion, and, as we carried a light to attract the birds, we often saw them asleep on their perches. Bat-fowling, it may be explained to the few who do not know what it was, was an old fashion of taking birds with the net. We used to select a very tall hawthorn hedge for the purpose, such hedges as are in a hilly country allowed to grow practically wild for the sake of the shelter they give. One boy startled the birds, and the other caught them in a net which he had attached to a stick. Now it was curious to notice what a variety of birds were obtained in this way. Often we got large birds such as wood-pigeons and rooks, but I think they must have been such as had been shot at or wounded, as it is not their habit to sleep in hedges. Sparrows were, of course, the most common, but there were usually linnets and finches in the bag, and sometimes there would be as many as twelve varieties. Occasionally a bird, even the wary blackbird, would go on sleeping quietly when a light was flashed on it, but the majority



W. A. J. Hensler.

ON THE EDGE OF THE FOREST.

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"WITHOUT O'ERFLOWING FULL."

rushed out with that blind fluttering flight which a day bird has in the dark. And even in that excitement the mystery of the winter night was not altogether unfeigned.

## WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

### THE RETURN OF THE SHORT-EARED OWLS.

DURING the first half of February short-eared owls became again as numerous upon the East Coast as in October and November, when they were arriving from oversea. As with almost all migrants, however, their return is much less noticed than their arrival, partly because an army of sportsmen are not now marching and countermarching in pursuit of game over the heaths and turnip-fields where these owls seek shelter, and partly because it is much easier to note the arrival in autumn of a species which has been absent all the summer,

than it is in early spring to detect the increase in numbers of a species which has been with us all the winter. Yet, when it happens in February that you put up several short-eared owls in a ramble across coast-wise fields where you have not seen any since November, it is easy to know that the migrants are returning northwards.

### THE FLIGHT OF OWLS.

The consummate ease of the measured strokes with which owls propel themselves through the air disposes the pace at which they travel; and at night they seem to glide, rather than fly at speed, in and out of the darkness. Nor, when you hold the fluffy body of an owl in your hand, does it seem in any way adapted for rapid

passage through the air. Yet even in the case of the common brown owl, when it issues from a wood at dusk, you cannot help noticing with how few strokes of the wings it crosses the sky, or when two owls are sporting together in the air, how easily they go aloft. So, too, when you chance to see a barn-owl hover, kestrel-wise, over a stubble, it seems to perform the feat with far less effort than the little falcon uses, and the other day I had the luck to witness a performance by a short-eared owl which gave me an insight into the ease with which the birds can cross the sea.

#### A WIDENING PANIC.

I had put it up from the margin of a turnip-field, which chanced to be the only suitable cover for such a bird in a wide area of ploughed fields and grassland, sloping to the salt marshes and the sea. Away went the owl with slow strokes of his wide, brown wings, rising ever higher as he flew, and spreading a larger ring of panic over the fields. The partridges went clattering and shrieking into the next parish; flocks of larks, shrilling and squealing in flight, flung themselves in every direction towards the horizon; and all round the margin of the turnip-fields blackbirds bolted, chattering, into the hedges. And still the terror spread as the owl rose higher, and great clouds of fleeing pheasants filled the distant sky. There was no idea in any small bird's mind of mobbing such an apparition.

#### PURSUERS OUTFLOWN.

One gallant rook, indeed, made an attempt to pursue the stranger, and thus gave me something to measure the owl's flight by, for the difference in the ascent of the two birds was so marked that it was only now and then that they seemed to be going in the same direction, the owl achieving in two turns what the rook barely accomplished in three. After a while the rook recognised the futility of his efforts, and went sailing down to join a cawing company of his friends, who, at the first alarm, had taken up strategic positions in distant trees. Then what would have been a serious danger to any bird of weaker wing confronted the owl, for a great flock of seagulls, which had doubtless been soaring in the neighbourhood when he rose, encompassed him round about, and first one and then another stooped at him. But, though glasses now were needed to watch his flight, he avoided each stoop with such ease—wafting himself as it were many yards to right or left of the gulls' descent with one stroke of his wide wings—that he still rose higher and higher, until at last he could be seen as a dark far speck to seaward, higher than the flickering cloud of gulls.

#### A WONDERFUL DESCENT.

From that height I have no doubt that he could plainly have seen on a clear day, across the mouth of the Wash, the coast of Lincolnshire, and with the favouring south wind that was gently blowing could have reached it without effort; but whether the horizon of the sea was hidden in haze or he had no inclination just then to complete another stage of his northward journey, the owl began to descend in wide zigzags, such as a paper kite commences to make earthwards when its string is broken. But, unlike the falling kite, which drifts always with the wind, the swift turns of the swooping owl's descent were calculated with such skill that they carried him at ever-increasing speed past the cloud of soaring gulls, past the trees where the rooks were still clamouring, against the wind to the corner of the very next turnip-field to that from which I had disturbed him. When he finally disappeared one somehow felt that applause ought to have arisen from the landscape at large in recognition of so fine an illustration of the art of flying.

#### RETURNING JACKDAWS.

Mention of the rooks which took such watchful interest in the short-eared owl's proceedings reminds me that he is not alone in moving northwards in the first half of February. A week earlier at the same spot the cawing of the alarmed rooks would have had a running accompaniment of querulous clamour from many jackdaws. Where are those jackdaws now? In autumn, when all day long for several days a procession of flocks of rooks and jackdaws passes overhead, we know that both are migrants just arriving; and our own rooks, going about their business in the fields below, take no notice of the strangers drifting in endless disorder across the sky. In the early year, however, it would be hard to say when these migrants repass on their return journey; but for the fact that, after our own jackdaws have departed to the distant cliffs or cathedrals where they nest, the coastwise fields are peopled at intervals by new flocks of jackdaws mixed with rooks. The latter might attract no notice, for there are rookeries close by; but the voice of the jackdaw in February, where no jackdaws breed, betrays the tripper. Thus we get an insight into the unobtrusive way in which the multitudes of crow-birds, which openly invade this country by army corps in autumn, depart before the spring in straggling groups and companies.

#### DO MIGRANTS EVER STAY WITH US?

Do they all depart, however? This is a very interesting question, with an important bearing upon the disputed problem, whether if gunners and collectors did not kill every rare bird they see, new breeding species and old breeding species which have been lost might not be added to the British list. So far as the rooks and jackdaws are concerned, I know no means by which the question can be answered with certainty; but, in spite of the fact that all birds of a species which migrates in autumn may be credited with an instinctive desire to return to their homes in spring, I am strongly of opinion that all of our winter visitors do not return. Many facts which suggest this might be quoted. The short-eared owls, for instance, of which I have been writing, are often tempted by the abundance of food offered in what we call "plagues of voles"—and, by the way, voles have been multiplying in that direction for several years now—to abandon their migrating instinct and remain with us to breed.

#### OUR ALIEN STARLINGS.

Take the starlings, again; it used to be an accepted fact that the British starling had a green gloss upon the feathers of its head, and that the Siberian starling had a purple gloss there, while in Eastern Europe an Intermediate starling was found with head partly purple and partly green. Now, so far as the East Coast is concerned, the British starling with a green head seems to be in a decided minority, the majority of our birds being Intermediate starlings, with a sprinkling of Siberian starlings. Now, how can this change have come about, except by migrants from foreign parts remaining to breed

in this country? Of course, these races of starlings are not distinct "species," and, as with the short-eared owls, the rooks, and the jackdaws, migrants may be more easily tempted to remain in a country where others of their own kind are already in residence. But if it is only a matter of temptation, who can say that the bittern, or any other visitant for whom we know that the conditions of these islands are suitable, might not meet temptation enough, just as the short-eared owls stay when voles are plentiful? If we shoot every rare visitant, of course this will never happen.

E. K. R.

## IN THE GARDEN.

#### THE SWEET VIOLET AND ITS VARIETIES.

**T**HIS is the subject of an excellent article in *Flora and Sylva* for December, and reproduced in the beautiful bound volume which we lately received. We have referred to this Violet article before, but mention it again, as Violets are favourites everywhere, although little is written about these fragrant flowers of the wayside bank and garden frame. A little book about the sweet Violets and the wild kinds from mountain and plain was published last year, and we believe since then a keener desire to know the Violets thoroughly exists on the part of the earnest gardener. As the author of the notes well says, page 299, everyone loves the Violet with its quiet beauty, its message of oncoming spring, and its ready response to the early sun from its nook amongst the scattered leaves of the wood, or the bowered bank of the hedgerow. Time was, and not far distant, when all alike were well content with these wayside gatherings, but as the demand increased the wild supplies failed, until the Violet found a place in gardens as offering a more assured harvest. And so began the slow improvement of the flower, our choice enriched by turn by the Violets of Southern Europe and of Russia. When the Second Empire reached its height France became the centre of its culture, and the first perpetual and large-flowered varieties were raised by the market growers of Paris, Souvenir de Millet père being the earliest gain of these growers. This first step gained, others quickly followed in the Czar and Gloire de Bourg la Reine of the large-flowered section, and similar improvements in the perpetual-flowered (Violette de quatre saisons) and the Parma Violet classes. At short intervals there followed sorts like Luxonne, Wellisiana, and that fine Violet, Princess of Wales, the advent of which, with their great size and length of stem, led to further demand for the flower. From this time the number of new kinds has greatly increased, until the garden Violet of to-day is hardly traceable in its lowly woodland form; yet the increase in size of petal, length of stem, and season of bloom, has been gained with little, if any, loss of form or of fragrance. Within the last few years there has arisen in some quarters a taste for Tree-Violets, in which infinite pains are wasted to induce an ugly and unnatural stem between the roots and the leaf-crown; it is a pity that growers cannot find something better to do.

#### VIOLETS IN WINTER.

The notes about growing Violets in frames in winter are of much interest, and practical too. As the author mentions, except in favoured districts or mild seasons, Violets do not flower in the open with freedom till spring is well advanced, and, for this reason, it has become usual to grow them under glass during winter and early spring. Though perfectly hardy, no plant is more sensitive to rough wind, and in the border its growth is often so checked by the biting blasts of spring that before the plant can recover warm days come with a rush, cutting short the season of its outdoor beauty. For this reason Violets are less grown in gardens than their beauty deserves, because gardeners cannot count upon their making so effective a show as bulbs and other things which are less sensitive to adverse conditions. Still, in many gardens where no glass can be given up to them, more might be done to make the Violet a success by the adoption of simple means. For early flowers the Violet border should be of free light soil which is sensitive to sunlight; this is best as a raised bank, sloping towards the sun, to get the most warmth and the least risk of stagnant water; if beneath the shelter of a wall or thick hedge, to break cold winds, so much the better. The plants should be well surfaced in autumn, and sheltered at night by thick straw mats resting upon a low wooden framework just clearing the plants. This is a great protection, shutting in whatever warmth may be in the soil, and shutting out frost and the cold dews, which are almost as great a check. To keep these mats dry it is a good plan to run a roll of tarred cloth over the straw when rain threatens. Plants so treated will bloom some weeks earlier than the main crop, and by a choice of varieties, by starting runners at different times of the year, and by setting a few tufts in different aspects, the season of flowering may be much lengthened. To do this it is not necessary to have lined beds in all parts of the garden, but a few tufts of Violets never look out of place anywhere, and after a few trials spots will be found favourable to early and late flowers. The best flowers are borne by young plants in their first season, and after the second year they should be renewed. The best plants for early flowers are grown from runners rooted the previous autumn in boxes of light soil and wintered under glass.

#### RANDOM NOTES.

*The Winter Aconite*.—Once again this cheery little yellow flower, in its quaint collar of green leaves, stars many a woodland walk and border. We noticed a little patch of it close to an old Apple tree a few days ago, and were delighted with the effect of the yellow flowers when wide open to the warm sunshine. Near to this bright colouring were Snowdrops and sweet Violets. It is when planted in orchard, woodland, or on bank, that the Winter Aconite is most attractive, and it is a happy companion to the scarlet Dogwood. We got this notion from the Royal Gardens, Kew, where so many delightful flower schemes are carried out. A bed of the Siberian Dogwood has the surface covered with Aconite, and the picture is worth reproducing. We shall do so next autumn, when planting time comes again. It enjoys a warm soil, and frequently dies out when in cold and heavy ground. Hundreds of acres are covered with the plant in Lincolnshire, and the flowers are sold in the markets for button-holes. One bloom is sufficient; there is no need of foliage, for the flower has its own leaves as a foil. Plant it freely

in woodland, under the branches of trees even, and then there will be a scattering of stars over the brown earth. The Aconite is quite comfortable under tree branches, a fact worth knowing, as it is these spots that we frequently are at a loss how to beautify. For the sake of easy reference in books and catalogues, we may mention that the botanical name of the Winter Aconite is *Eranthis hyemalis*, and it has no relationship with the Aconite of the border, which is better known perhaps as Monkshood.

*Thorns as a Protection.*—In a delightful article contributed recently by Canon Ellacombe to the *Pilot*, there occurs an interesting reference to thorns as a protection to the flower. The writer says: "I suppose that throughout the vegetable kingdom thorns are the chief protectors, and it is worth noting that Nature does not waste her means of protection; she may protect by bitter leaves or by nasty juices or by thorns, but does not use them wastefully; if she protects by scents she does not by thorns. I can only recollect one instance to the contrary. Our own Sweet Briar has both scented leaves and thorns, and I know of no other plant with such a double protection to the flowers; and perhaps it is not a double protection—it is quite possible that the scented leaves were even an attraction, and so the further protection of thorns was necessary. This double protection for the Sweet Briars did not escape Shakespeare: 'Briars shall have leaves as well as thorns, And be as sweet as sharp'—*i.e.*, sweet leaves and sharp thorns. But how great a protection thorns are may be seen in the Cactuses, which grow in dry places, and each Cactus carries its own ample reservoir of water, and if it were not for the formidable array of thorns these reservoirs would soon be broken into and emptied. The most beautiful instance of thorn protection, and one that fully proves the intention of thorns, is to be seen in the great American Aloe (*Agave americana*), now fully naturalised through the Riviera. In the whole vegetable world no plant has more rigid leaves, each leaf being made more rigid by being very much thickened at the base, and ending with a long and hard thorn. Such leaves seem almost immovable, but there comes a time in the life of the plant when these stiff, ungainly leaves move themselves. That time comes when the plant is preparing to flower, which does not occur until it is from ten to twenty years old. Then these stiff leaves raise themselves and bend over the coming flower-shoot, and form an almost impenetrable fence, but one that the flower can get through, and rise sometimes to a height of 20ft. or 30ft. The young flower is probably very sweet, for if destroyed there comes in its place a plentiful supply of the sweet intoxicating pulque; but if allowed to grow, the matter which would form the pulque is drawn up the long flower-stem, and the flower is fully formed, and the seeds are ripened, and then the thorny leaves have done their work and they all die."

*Sowing Pentstemon Seed.*—The Pentstemon is one of the brightest of summer and autumn flowers, and this is the time to sow seed, unless, of course, a distinct variety is desired, and then it is needful to take cuttings. The first point is to get the very best seed, and therefore go to some firm that may be trusted to have saved the seed from the most beautiful varieties. Sow thinly in shallow boxes filled with light soil, and place them in a warm house, or in a frame, where gentle heat can be given. The seed does not take long to germinate, and when the seedlings are sufficiently large to handle, they must be pricked off into other boxes, and plenty of space allowed between each plant. When the Pentstemons have got quite "stocky," as the gardener says, move them to a cool frame or a

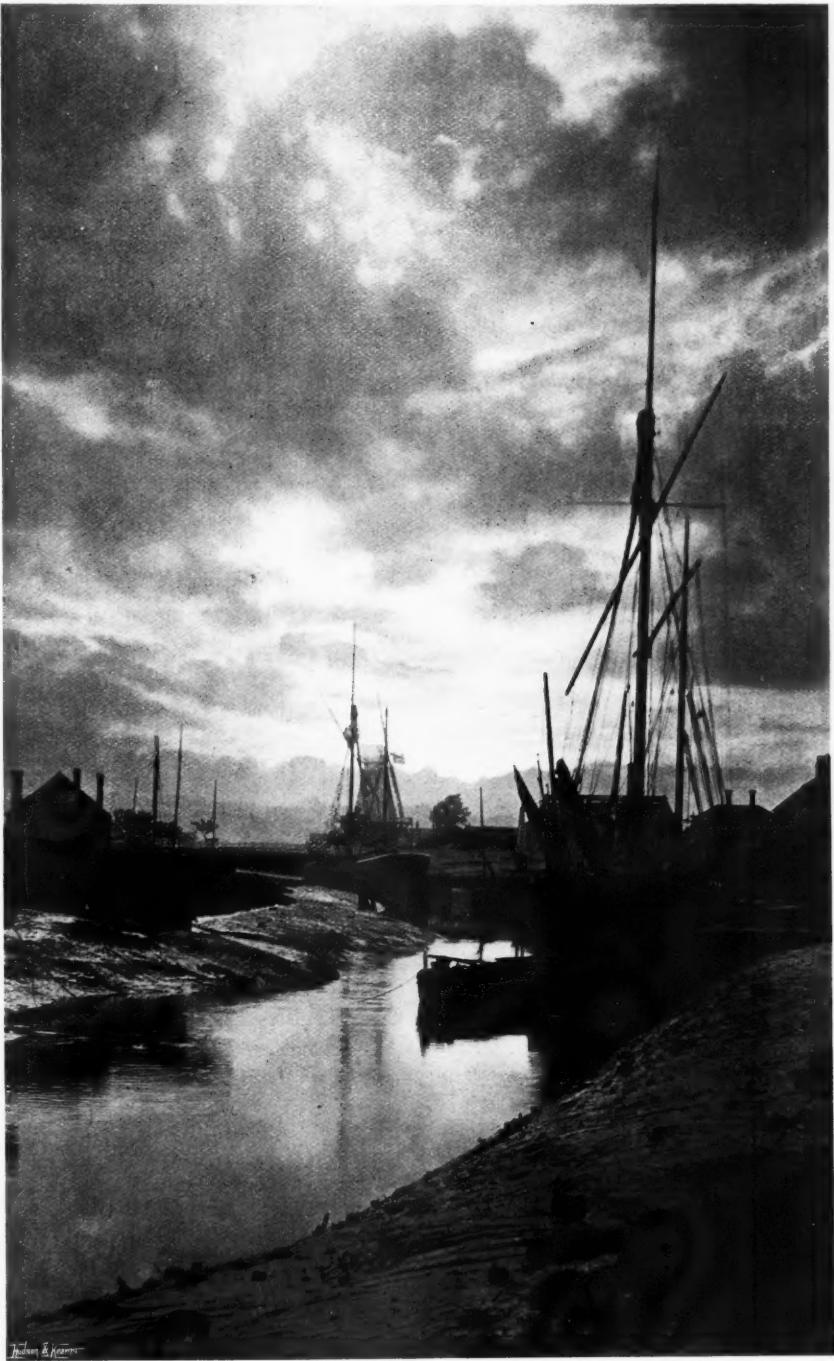
greenhouse, to encourage strong growth, and there let them remain until early April, when they should be planted where they are to flower.

*A New Greenhouse Flower.*—At a recent meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society a flower that attracted much attention was *Moschosma riparium*. It comes from South Africa, and when out of bloom is strongly reminiscent of *Salvia* or *Coleus*. It may be recognised by its oval-shaped leaves, deeply toothed, and graceful spikes of small white flowers, which have only the purple anthers to give colour relief. As these spikes or panicles, to use a botanically correct description, are sometimes 3ft. long, a plant in full bloom is very beautiful. The *Moschosma* flowers exactly when it is wanted—namely, at the close of the year, and a succession is maintained through the winter months. Our advice is to consider the *Moschosma* as an annual and strike cuttings each year. When the flowering is over cut back the plants, and place them in a warm, moist corner of the hothouse or in a propagating pit to make them produce fresh shoots. When these are 3in. long remove them, and insert as cuttings. Pot on when rooted and treat in much the same way as you would a *Geranium*. In the greenhouse at Kew, flowers are intermingled with charming effect, and the *Moschosma* is associated with little forced trees of the pretty *Pyrus floribunda*.

## AN OLD CINQUE PORT.

**I**N the south of Sussex, some fifteen miles from Ashford and eight from Hastings, stands the quaint old-world town of Rye, pervaded at all times by a quiet, somnolent tranquillity, full of a restful peace. Seen from the Romney Marshes,

Rye looks almost like a foreign village. Standing on a little rocky eminence, with its clustered gay red roofs, the square church tower, the old white windmill, and circled round by the masts and brown sails of the fishing boats, it is indeed a glorious piece of ruddy colouring set in an oasis of green. Rye is situated at the junction of three rivers, the Rother, the Brede, and the Lillingham. It was at one time an important port, but as the sea gradually receded and left the town standing high and dry, it has fallen from its lofty estate. The sea-coast now lies some two and a-half miles off, and between that and Rye stretches the marshland which was once the bed of the ocean, but upon which are now peacefully browsing thousands of sheep and cattle. This is an ideal spot for the photographer or artist, for one can work quietly and undisturbed in the streets, sketching materials and cameras being no longer objects of interest. The quaintest crooked streets and primitive picturesque timbered houses meet one at every turn, some of the buildings being probably two or three centuries old. Perhaps the most charming part in this ancient town is Mermaid Street, very narrow and steep, paved with round cobbles, with grass and moss growing in between the stones. Cottages and stately houses stand side by



M. C. Cottam.

WAITING FOR THE TIDE.

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IDLE.

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side, many of them overgrown with trailing creepers, whilst time has thrown over all those subtle tints and hues which only age can give. Old-fashioned figures clad in print gowns and sun-bonnets are by no means a rarity. To meet one of these walking down Mermaid Street makes us feel that we have taken a step back into a past century. By the rivers are endless shipping studies : two-



M. C. Cottam.

A PASSAGE-WAY, RYE.

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masted vessels of 200 tons bringing coal or grain, long picturesquely old barges laden with timber, fishing smacks, some smart and new, others old and weather-beaten, making good studies in colour with their yellow and brown sails. The fishermen themselves are obliging and courteous, willing to pose, besides being an interesting community of different nationalities.

The Cliff Walk on the north-west of Rye affords plenty of opportunities for picture-making, and is in itself most interesting. Here we can trace the outline of cliffs, and fancy soon turns backward to the time when the sea beat with thunderous boom at the foot of them, and white-winged seagulls skimmed overhead. But now all is overgrown with grass and flowers, the upper ridge still stands boldly out, silhouetted against the sky, but towards the crest countless rabbits burrow. The fine old church of St. Mary has many noteworthy features, having portions of work from the Norman period up to the Perpendicular. In the transepts and nave some Norman work will be found; above the transepts is a triforium, apparently built into the thickness of the outer wall, with small pointed arches. The beautiful flying buttresses of the fifteenth century are perfect examples of their kind; there is also a fine flamboyant window. Another very curious feature is the old clock, said by some to be the most ancient in England that is still in working order, which is



THE OLD HOSPITAL IN MERMAID STREET.

supposed to have been the gift of Queen Elizabeth. It has a huge pendulum swinging inside the church right across the aisle, its monotonous tick, tock, and constant motion giving a strange effect to the interior. Rye has passed through some stirring times, for thrice was the town burnt and sacked during the fourteenth century by the French. The Strand Gate, a portion of the town wall, the Friary, and the Ypres Tower, which looks gloomy and sullen, are all that remain from these repeated attacks in bygone days.

Those who climb the downs lying to the north of Rye will be amply repaid by the view before them and the magic of the sunshine, with the exhilarating breezes from the English Channel. Here we can see the curling crests of the breaking waves, and the white-winged sails of the passing brigs, or the smoke from a steamer. Away to the left stretches the vast tract of the Romney Marshes—to some dreary and uninteresting, to others full of strange witchery, with their clinging mists and fleeting shadows and sunshine, never two days the same. But I think, to see this old Cinque Port at its best, one should wander beside the banks of the Rother towards eventide, choosing a time when the tide is on the ebb. Rye itself stands darkly outlined against the sunset sky, the quaint gables and lichen-covered roofs a mass of rich purple, with curling wreaths of pearly smoke ascending heavenward, and throwing over all a

most poetic aspect. Gleaming lights glint on the wet mud left bare by the tide; reflections wind and unwind of the boats that lie in all possible positions; the gentle lap, lap of the river as it croons a lullaby on its way to join the sea; the sad cry of a sea-bird; or the "Yeave-ho, Yeave-ho" of the sailors pulling in a sail, whilst the land grows shadowy and vague—all these sights and sounds combine to produce an effect by no means readily effaced from memory.

MARY C. COTTAM.

## THE . . . GAMEKEEPER.

**I**T is too often the custom of authors of works on sport, more especially so in regard to books on shooting, to give long, unacknowledged extracts from various authorities that have previously dealt with the same subjects. Though quotations, such as we refer to, are at once recognised by the persons who originally indited them, they are not, however, so readily detected by the public generally, particularly when, as is usually the case, the wording is purposely



M. C. Cottam.

ON THE ROTHER.

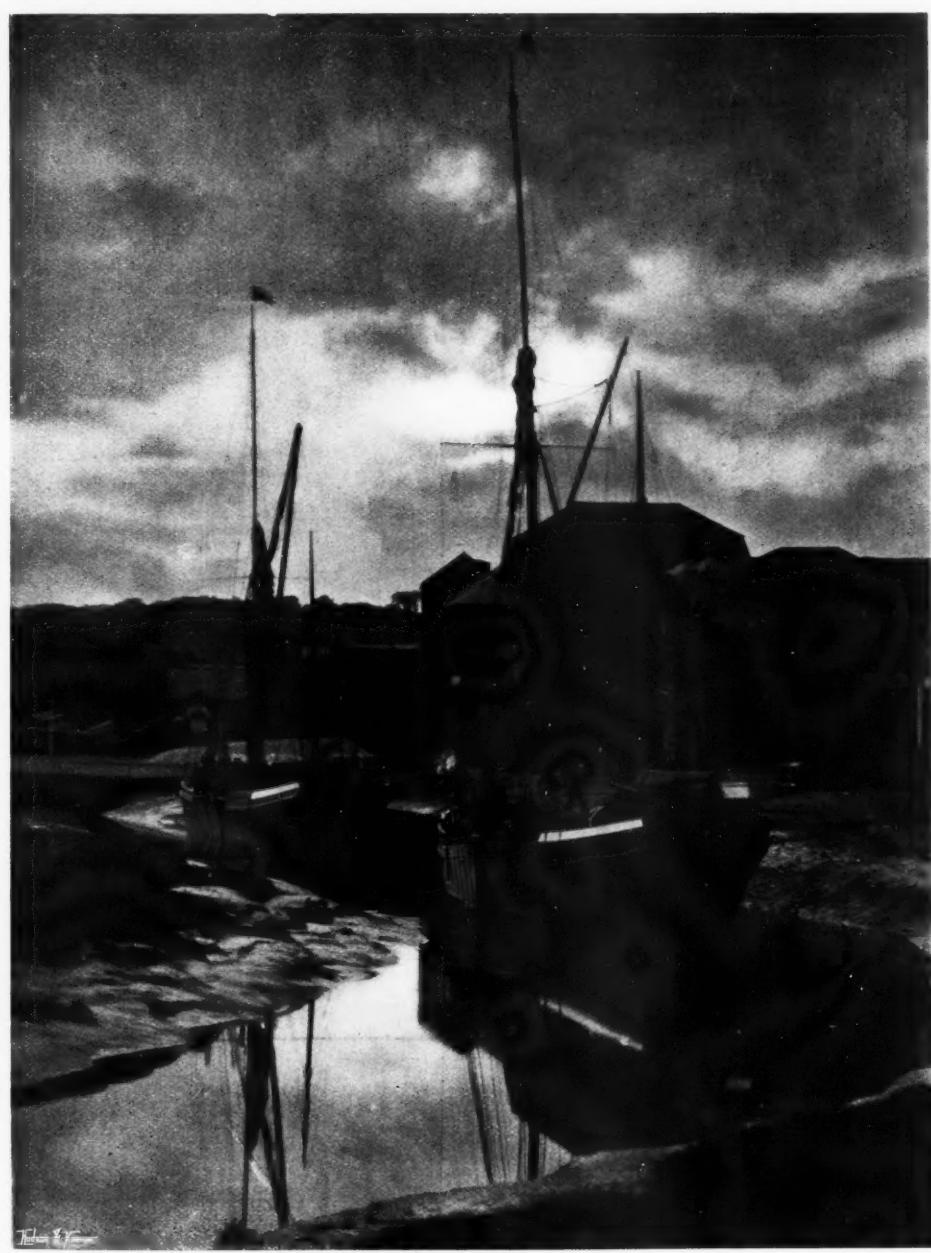
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altered in some slight degree. Nothing can be more unfair or reprehensible than such a practice as this, a system of padding and pot-boiling that is by no means uncommon among the compilers of the cheap books on sport that are from time to time offered for sale as indispensable to every country house library.

Though "The Keeper's Book" (Morton), by A. Stoddart Walker and P. Jeffrey Mackie, is well-nigh, it may be said, a compilation from cover to cover, we have no fault to find with it in the matter of due acknowledgments to the many authors quoted therein. In the preface to this book we are told that without the writings of the Marquess of Granby, Lord Walsingham, Sir Ralph Payne-Gallwey, Mr. Stuart Wortley, Mr. Bromley Davenport, Mr. Lloyd Price, Mr. Harting, Mr. Horace Hutchinson, Mr. Carnegie, Mr. A. Shipley, Mr. Tom Speedy, Mr. J. G. Millais, Mr. Tegetmeier, Messrs. Tudway and Hall, it would have been impossible to attain anything like the comparative completeness of the volume. The authors also express their sense of obligation to Lord Douglas Graham, Captain Shaw Kennedy, Dr. Charles Reid, Mr. John Lamb, Mr. Henry Lamond, Mr. J. S. Henderson, and Mr. P. D. Malloch for the chapters they have individually contributed.

With such an exhaustive list of standard authorities as above given, who have all (with the exception of the second set of names who here assist to produce the book) written frequently on the subject of shooting and its preservation, no wonder the authors hope "that their work will be found comprehensive enough to serve as a *vade mecum* for the British gamekeeper."

We read that "The Keeper's Book" is written, compiled we would say rather, for "the good keeper who knows his work and for the bad one who does not." If a keeper is a good one and knows his work, surely he does not require instruction. A bad keeper, to use the words of the authors, of course does require advice and tuition, and we quite think the book before us will be of use to him. We cavil, though, at the adjective "bad"; it is not a nice word to apply to any keeper unless he is one who



M. C. Cottam. AN OLD CINQUE PORT: THE STRAND AT EVENING.

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drinks, gambles, or poaches. We take it, however, the authors intend "bad" to imply "ignorant." In fact, the dedication of the book is not well chosen, and it would have been far neater and more explanatory to have merely written that its contents were dedicated to the keepers of the British Islands. Many a master would hesitate to present the book to a young keeper learning his duties, and who would perforce be ignorant of them through simply a want of experience, and who in no way could, therefore, be termed a "bad" keeper.

Though "The Keeper's Book" is said to be intended for all keepers—English, Scotch, Welsh, or Irish—we soon discover it is a work written by Scotchmen for Scotch keepers. There is very little in it that applies to shooting south of the Border, or to the keepers in other parts of the British Islands except Scotland. The authors' opinion of Scotch keepers is not a very high one, though we are glad to say we do not agree with them in their remarks. It is, however, quite true that Scotch keepers are rarely successful in England, as they are not usually friendly enough to those very important people, the tenant-farmers of an estate. They are, in fact, more or less, as a rule, out of their element in such counties, as for instance, as Norfolk, Suffolk, or Cambridgeshire, where pheasant and partridge driving on a large scale is the chief method of shooting. Place a Scotch keeper on a wild Scotch moor, or where he has to walk up with his guns rough patches of cover for a very moderate bag of partridges, and he is able and willing enough.

The keeper we should have no hesitation in declining the services of is the one described by the authors of "The Keeper's Book" in the following sentences: "The pride and exigencies of race which have confined the Highlander's instincts to hunting and fighting, also assert themselves in a marked way in his relations to his master. If the latter is 'the laird,' one of a line of fifty Campbells, a hundred Mackintoshes, or a thousand Grants, then the Highlander is a much more satisfactory workman than if his master is a 'Sassenach' or comes of a branch which he still regards as an alien people. In the former case, he is one of a family; in the latter, he has an instinctive feeling of resentment in being reduced to a position of mere servitude." As ninety-nine out of a hundred shootings in Scotland are annually occupied by "Sassenachs," it would indeed be a hopeless state of affairs if the keepers of these shootings felt and acted as indicated in the quotation we have given.

Our experience is, that if a Highland keeper is treated fairly and firmly, whoever his employer may be, whether a *nouveau riche* or a Cockney tradesman, he will do his duty well and truly, and, whatever his private feelings or inclinations may be, he will keep them rigidly secret to himself. As we have said, this book, if carefully studied by a keeper learning his business, is a useful one. It contains a considerable amount of desirable information that all keepers should know, though it be in the form of notes and advice that have appeared constantly before, such as, for instance, the close times for beasts, birds, and fish, and the legal powers bestowed on keepers in the exercise of their vocation. We have chapters on the ideal keeper, on relations with farmers, and the points of law a gamekeeper should know; also a capital chapter on the destruction of vermin by Tom Speedy, himself formerly, we believe, a gamekeeper. This chapter commences with the undeniably doctrine—how often, we wonder, preached before—that "The first essential condition in order to increase a stock of game on an estate is the killing of the vermin." Mr. Speedy is for slaughtering every animal and bird that he considers in the slightest degree inimical to the interests of game, the game he refers to being chiefly grouse. Away with the golden eagle, the peregrine, the badger, the fox, *et hoc genus*, one and all, writes Mr. Speedy; even he does not spare the otter, which now and then takes an occasional rabbit for its young.



Rev. H. W. Dick. SUNSHINE AND LEISURE.

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shooters." From the above two extracts we wonder where our authors have learnt their experience of grouse-driving, or among what class of sportsmen and keepers they have associated!

The chapter on partridge-shooting contains many useful hints, though we entirely disagree with the advice that "all runners should be left alone till any dead birds dropped at the same time are picked up." In our opinion a retriever should be sent for a running bird the moment it falls. If a dead bird is not found for some minutes, the running bird may be in the next parish, to be either lost to the bag or to fall a victim to vermin.

We have a capital, and all too short, article on deer-stalking by Captain Shaw Kennedy, which is followed by practical ones on the rabbit, pheasant, and wild duck. We then come to "The Gamekeeper as a Fishing Gillie," by P. D. Malloch, the well-known fishing-tackle dealer of Perth, himself an enthusiastic and clever angler, and who evidently knows the science of which he writes. The book concludes with chapters on Scottish angling law, on loaders, and how they should handle their masters' guns, the miscellaneous duties of keepers, and, last of all, the much-disputed, and never-to-be-settled, scales of tips to keepers.

As many writers have done before, the authors give a scale

In criticising the writings of Sir Herbert Maxwell, we find Mr. Speedy much at fault; not only is he incorrect in his criticism, but he is also somewhat ungracious. In alluding to Sir Herbert Maxwell's "Memories of the Months," he writes: "I have all my life picked up the pellets of owls to examine them, and have found the remains of all song-birds. One sentence in 'Memories of the Months' would seem to indicate that the author of them had been nodding. He says that he has no doubt that if any young chick or pheasant comes in the way, the owl will pounce on it and enjoy it mightily." But, writes Mr. Speedy, "young chicks are not, or ought not to be, abroad in the night, which is the only time that most kinds of owls can hunt. It is exceedingly unfortunate that distinguished authors should record their opinions instead of their observations."

Has it never occurred to Mr. Speedy that wild hen pheasants are most careless of their broods, notoriously so, and frequently allow them to wander at dusk without supervision or control, very often indeed losing them altogether? Under these conditions, which are, alas, quite usual ones, the small chicks form a natural prey for owls. If, too, owls only hunt, as the author asserts, by night, how does he account for the remains of the song-birds he has found in their disgorged pellets? for the owls certainly would not take the birds as they were roosting in the trees. We may add that two summers ago at about four in the afternoon, in, of course, broad daylight, we saw an owl drop from a thick beech tree and seize hold of a pheasant chick and carry it up into the branches. Such criticism as we have quoted strikes a harsh note in "The Keeper's Book," and we trust that in any future editions it will be expurgated.

The chapter on grouse-shooting and the management of a grouse moor is ably and sensibly written in the main; but here, again, we find some rather foolish assertions; for instance, we read: "The only objection made to closely placed grouse butts has been the one of the possible danger of accident; but although this is possible, it ought not to be probable, and it is hardly a wise policy to spoil one's sport for the fear of fools. The problem is reduced, therefore, to one consideration—is the master willing to take the risk for the prize of better sport? Of course, knowingly, or unknowingly, he must on occasion have to admit *idiots* into his firing line." The word *idiots* we have put in italics. We doubt if the host of a grouse-driving party ever knowingly admits, what the authors designate, an idiot among his guns to the common danger of everybody else. Again, we read: "On no account must a very prevalent fashion be permitted to continue of allowing the grouse butts to take care of themselves, or leaving their repair to the

of tips. It is here laid down that for a day's rabbit-shooting a keeper should receive a present of five shillings. Five shillings for a day of 100 or 200 rabbits might be generous, but what about a day when the bag of rabbits, as is very common, amounts to 600 or more!

Taken as a whole this book is an excellent one to place in the hands of the Scotch keeper, a man who has, as it may happen, to superintend grouse-shooting, deer-stalking, salmon-fishing, ptarmigan, and black game. "The Keeper's Book" for England, Ireland, and Wales has yet to be written.

## SHOOTING AT SHERINGHAM.

**T**HIERE is always a particular charm in shooting near the sea. On the wooded hills of Sheringham Hall this satisfaction comes as part of the setting of some of the most beautiful woods, and as a scenic addition to the pleasure of shooting some of the tallest pheasants seen anywhere in this country. Such are the hilly and broken nature of the ground, the depth of the ravines in some parts, and the height of the trees in others, that there practically are no low birds at Sheringham, and many come over too high to shoot at all. Altogether it is one of the prettiest shoots in Norfolk, though it cannot, and its owner does not try to, compete with many others in securing record bags. Suffice it to say that every pheasant is a "good bird" in sporting phrase.

The name of Sheringham brings to many the remembrance of a seaside summer, when the crowded beach and still more



W. A. Rouch.

DRIVING THEM OUT OF THE ROOTS.

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W. A. Rouch.

COLONEL EDEN.

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W. A. Rouch.

COMING FAST WITH THE WIND.

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crowded links show how many visitors spend their holidays in the "lower town." There the old fishing village is almost swamped by the red-brick lodging-houses and villas. But the Sheringham we are concerned with is quite a different place. It lies some two miles from the sea, at the foot of hills which would be high in any county and are very high for Norfolk. It is called Upper Sheringham, and is a purely agricultural village, with its flint-bedded cottages, and just beyond it are the park and Sheringham Hall. The shooting illustrated in the

accompanying pictures, which, like so many others taken for COUNTRY LIFE this season, were secured on an awful day of mist and Stygian darkness, was the home beat round the park; but if this suggests a "tame" shoot elsewhere, it certainly does not here. Between the house and the sea lie three pointed oak-covered hills, on the very summit of which is an old "gazebo" looking out to sea, from a height of some 250ft., straight towards the polar ice. Opposite there lies a long basin of park, and beyond that is a series of corresponding heights, each crowned with wood, with others, lying to the east and west respectively, so that the pheasants are driven from top to top over the valleys. At the back of these hills is a large extent of most beautiful woods, ancient and modern, well known to the visitors to Sheringham who, by Mr. Upcher's kindness, are allowed to visit them. It must be added that this permission is sometimes abused by persons who destroy the flowers and damage the shrubs, and that a hint has occasionally to be given that they are private property. These large woods are too big for ordinary covert-shooting, but are famous resorts for woodcock. Excellent old-fashioned sport with woodcock, cock pheasants, and ground game is enjoyed there.

A word should be said as to the character of the woods shot on the day dealt with, for they are most



W. A. Rouch.

DUCK OVER THE PARK.

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remarkable, and those on the main hills exceptionally lovely, like a remnant of primeval forest. The three hills next the sea are covered by an oak wood, in which almost every tree springs directly from the ground in front two to three stems, or in one stem with a large knot at the bottom. Once these oaks would seem to have been cut as coppice wood, and then allowed to grow up years later. On some of the main hills, while the whole surface is covered with deep bracken, the trees are like self-sown timber, ancient Scotch firs, some of them fallen or broken, graceful birches, gnarled oaks, tall beeches, old spruce, and rhododendrons, making up an exquisite picture, from which constant glimpses of the sea are caught through the glades.

Passing from scenery to shooting, the actual experiences of the day's sport illustrated are far more possible to describe than is usually the case. The beginning was made almost at the back of the three oak hills. Here the guns were put quite 150yds. out in a turnip-field, whence to the right is a view seawards towards Weybourne, where, in the course of the drive, partridges, pheasants, and seagulls may often all be seen in the air together. There are small coverts below, whence the pheasants came very high over the guns to the coverts above. Just in the oak wood behind the guns three woodcock were shot in less than three minutes a

month later. The oak woods are shown in the photograph. A wood on a high hill in the park was next brought across to these same oak woods. It is called the "Old Game Bag," from its shape, and when very tall pheasants, equally tall wild duck, and a woodcock or two come over simultaneously, the guns have something to think about. The third flush was again over the park to the oak woods from the rookery, and the fourth from an isolated ridge, called Wellborough. Most of the Wellborough birds were out foraging over the fields round a very curious covert called the Sandhill. The sport here is peculiarly interesting. The Sandhill is a kind of knoll or jut at the edge of a gentle escarpment, behind and in front of which are arable fields. Part of it is sandhill part covert, and the guns stand at least 100yds. back between it and Wellborough. As the beaters approach, pheasants, partridges, hares, and a few rabbits appear constantly running over

and round the Sandhill, and then the more adventurous make a rush for it, either on earth or in air, for Wellborough and the park. The Rev. Hamilton Upcher, shooting there later in the season, killed two hares with one barrel at a considerable distance, and going at speed, when they just happened to cross each other.



W. A. Rouch.

SHERINGHAM HALL.

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A continual rush of very high pheasants closes a most exciting beat. On the day illustrated quite a hundred birds came over, all well "skied," though coming straight; there are very few twisters.

The combination of pheasants not only very high, but also making a most baffling twist, is gradually worked up to as a climax in the oak hills after luncheon. The last isolated covert in the park, called Cracking Hill, is taken into the oak hills, when the serious work of driving this high and beautiful ground seawards begins. There are three stands, in all of which the birds come very high, and in the last of which they not only swing out, often at such a height that, as someone remarked, "you want a ladder to shoot from," but also make a twist like the bottom half of an S, to go right back along the hills. The first stand is in the woods themselves, near the summit (the only stand inside a wood all day). The next two are in the open, though a gun keeps in close to the wood to hit—or miss—the worst twisters flying back. The shooting illustrated here took place before the arrival of the woodcock, though these are not the regular woodcock ground, for which parts of the estate are justly famous. There were at least nine woodcock when the same coverts were shot later. Of the woodcock-shooting proper on this estate it is hoped to give some account later.



W. A. Rouch.

DUCKS SETTLING.

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It may be asked whether any particular devices or tactics are used to get these consistently high birds, which, as Mr. Horace Hutchinson remarked in an article which appeared some time ago in *COUNTRY LIFE*, are by no means the most common characteristic of Norfolk shooting. The ground does a great deal on this beat, and still more on the main Sheringham hills and heaths, to secure this desirable end. But one precaution worth noting is taken here. Where it is desirable to make an artificial flush, this is done at the very tops of the hills. Larch tops are scattered to hold up the bracken there, and that useless stuff elder is here made of service by "nicking" and bending it over. But the birds have a natural habit of flying from hill to hill, while on the sides of the "heaths" further back they cross deep gorges at a pace which tests the visitor's powers sometimes unduly. The Upcher family have for a long time held a place as shots in Norfolk somewhat like that of the Walkers or Graces in cricket. Anyone who sees the family "training ground" on these Sheringham hills can easily account for their skill.

The beaters at these shoots are an interesting sight. At least half of them are the well-known and most plucky Sheringham fishermen, who go out in almost all weathers and any distance in their tiny boats. Bright-eyed, bearded, and tanned, with sou'-wester hats and overalls of red sailcloth, or blue jerseys, they make a picturesque addition to the scene. Woodcock have been more numerous this year at Sheringham than for some time past. Nineteen were killed in a day just before the New Year, and thirty-one in the course of three days.

C. J. CORNISH.

## PEARL-FISHING IN SCOTLAND.

THE Eastern world—and more especially the Island of Ceylon—supplies our market with the best gems in pearls.

Yet at one time pearl-fishing was no mean pursuit in Scotland. Indeed, on many of the Scottish rivers this industry was rather a lucrative one. It was once a common remark that the Esk, near



*Rev. H. Upcher. FISHERMEN BEATERS.*

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dealer travelled throughout Scotland, collecting all the native pearls he could find, and £10,000 is said to have been left annually by this



*W. A. Rouch.*

TC THE NEXT STAND.

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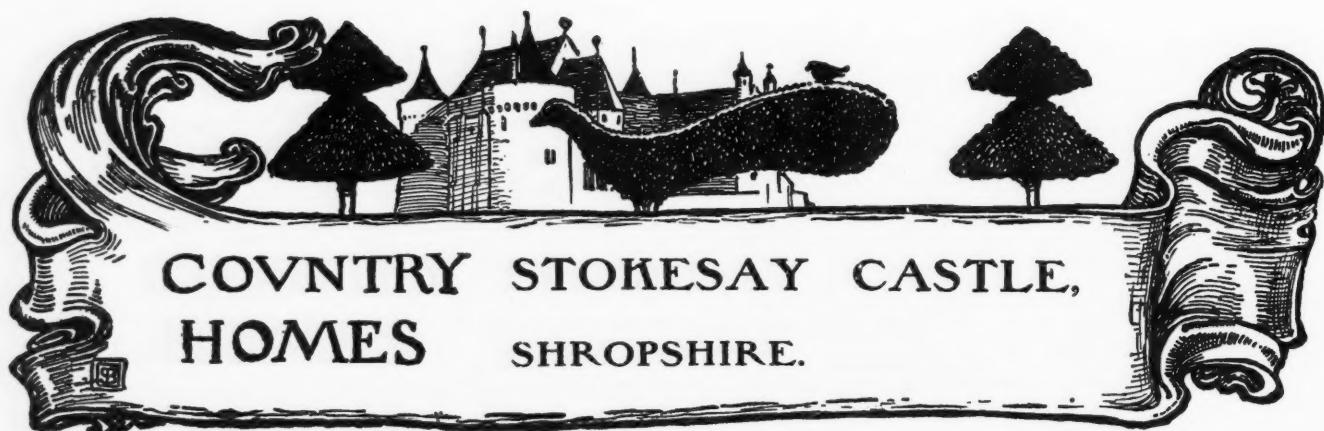
dealer with the local pearl-fishers. The Tay has always been renowned for its treasures, and the Earn too. When I was a boy I often fished the Earn for pearls, and although I knew little or nothing of the financial value of the finds then made, still, not a few of them to-day are worth from 10s. to 50s. each. Many of them, of course, were worthless. Every mussel, of course, does not harbour even a rough gem, but from experience I would guess that every second mussel contains a pearl of one kind or other. I speak in connection with good ground, because it is only over certain bottoms that pearls abound. Some mussels will contain more than one pearl; indeed, in some a dozen may be found. I place no value on the statements that pearls will always be found where ducks love to feed, where otters abound, or where aquatic wild birds congregate. All these creatures will be seen on sheets of water where no mussel ever lived. In fact, the purity of the water itself is of first importance, and many stretches of water likely to favour the growth of the gems will be found quite barren. A pebbly bottom, in my view, is an essential element, and when the water is pure and clear over this, the best and most valuable gems are to be procured. Although pearls are often found in muddy beds, they are never so rich as those fished from the clear, pebbly bottom.



*W. A. Rouch.*

UNDER THE OAK HILLS.

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**S**TOKESAY CASTLE is one of the most perfect and interesting examples England possesses of the fortified domestic architecture of the thirteenth century. It stands in Shropshire, a county well replenished with castellated remains, for it was the borderland where English barons withstood the onslaught of the Welsh. As Camden says, "Shropshire is replenished with castles standing thick on every side, by reason it was a frontier country in regard of repelling the Welshmen in the marshes bordering thereupon." The castle is particularly interesting, because it shows how men were accustomed to dwell in commodious buildings, presenting the amenities of their time, while close adjacent was the strong tower to which they could retire when the storm of rapine burst upon the land. Mr. H. J. Allcroft of Stokesay Court, whose beautiful house we illustrated on March 2nd, 1901, has done an excellent work by staying the ravages of decay. At an earlier time Mrs. Stackhouse Acton, a true lover of our old architecture, had induced Lord Craven, who then possessed the estate, to make good the effects of time and the destructive effects of occupancy as a farm.

The Shropshire Stoke is one of half a hundred others in England, and took its distinguishing suffix from the family of Say, to whom it belonged. In Domesday it appeared that Roger de Laci held it, with much land, and men and women serfs, with villeins and cottagers, a mill for the grinding of corn, and a bee farm. From De Laci it came to the hands of Helias de Say, but before the thirteenth century was over it had passed to John de Verdon, who had married a daughter of the house,

and was a stout old fighter of the marshes and a crusader as well. Afterwards John de Ludlow held the place by the singular service of rendering a hen sparrow-hawk yearly, and it was this possessor's son who obtained permission to fortify or crenellate his house with a wall of lime or stone.

Thus originated the picturesque building of Stokesay Castle. At the end of the fifteenth century the estate passed by marriage to one of the Vernons of Haddon, but was sold successively to the Mainwarings and Cravens. In the Civil War it was garrisoned by Sir Samuel Baldwin for the Royal cause, and the family of the defender lived there until 1727, after which time the old structure fell slowly to decay until it was rescued as has been described.

It now presents as picturesque a range of buildings as we could discover anywhere, and its features embody the peculiarities of various dates and styles. The plan was an irregular quadrangle surrounded by a moat about 22yds. wide, which came up close to the wall. Now the entrance is through the remarkably picturesque gate-house, which is a rich specimen of Elizabethan work. The courtyard is an irregular oblong, and is complete except that some buildings have been destroyed on the north side. The gate-house is on the east, and, on the opposite side, on entering, the range of the gabled house is seen in singularly attractive form. At the south end of the structure is the strong tower, or keep, which is connected by covered passages with the main building. There were thus means by which the defenders could retreat under cover to their stronghold, if once the courtyard were won by the foe. The tower is of



J. Gale.

THE PRIEST'S TOWER AND GATE-HOUSE.

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STOKESAY CASTLE FROM THE CHURCHYARD.

J. Gate.

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unusual style and plan, being an irregular polygon, but presenting the appearance of a double octagon, with loopholed embattlements and strong buttresses. The pile is of three storeys, the lower one being very irregular internally, with window openings set obliquely in the walls, so as to make it extremely difficult for any arrow or other missile to reach the interior. The entrance is strongly defended, and flanked by the two great buttresses, but there was communication with the main building by a covered way on the west side. A stairway in the thickness of the wall leads up to the next storey, which had also an external entrance communicating with the principal apartments in the main building. The third storey was that in which the fighting men were mostly stationed, with access to the battlements, from which they could pour down missiles upon the assailants.

In the domestic building the great hall has the principal place, occupying the whole width and height of the middle portion. Its size is 51ft. by 31ft., and it is lighted on the west side by four large windows which looked over the moat, and on the east side by three large ones and a shorter one now blocked, each with its gable, as may be seen in the picture. The windows are transomed, and are of two lights, trefoiled, and with early cusping. The roof internally is interesting, having very strong double collar beams, curved collar braces, and a fine king post, the whole resting upon stone corbels mouldings. The principal entrance is on the north side by a large arched doorway from the courtyard, and there is a door at the south end, opening into the lower apartments of that wing, and through them to the tower. Leading to the solar or upper room in the same wing is an external staircase, which may be seen in our picture. The solar chamber is finely panelled, and has a segmental arch of stone for its fireplace, the spandrels being filled with good carving, while the carved mantel may well be of rather later date. The room has two small openings into the hall, and at one time it communicated with the second storey of the tower. The entrance door is a characteristic square-headed trefoil.

At the other end of the hall is a staircase of solid timber leading up to a large landing or platform, from which access is gained to the apartments in the north wing. These are extremely picturesque externally, being of timber, with very quaint roofs and rude bracketing below, upon which the upper storey projects

as the "Priest's Tower," and is well seen in one of our pictures.

Taken altogether, Stokesay Castle is undoubtedly not only one of the most interesting, but also one of the most quaint and



J. Gale.

THE BANQUETING-HALL.

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picturesque remains of ancient military architecture applied to the dwellings of our ancestors.

## BOSTON HOUSE, MIDDLESEX.

**B**RENTFORD is famous for the possession of Boston House, the seat of the Rev. William James Stracey-Clitherow, of whom it is particularly notable, remembering that Brentford is in the very fringe of the metropolis, that he is descended from the gentleman who purchased the estate as long ago as 1670. The house is depicted in old plates as a pleasant gabled structure of Jacobean aspect, with later windows, standing in a beautiful garden, upon a slight elevation, as it stands to-day. There was but one manor in Brentford parish, that of Bordeston or Burston, commonly called Boston, which was once part of the possessions of St. Helen's Priory, Bishopsgate. After the Dissolution it was granted successively to the Duke of Somerset and the Earl of Leicester. The latter sold it to Sir Thomas Gresham, and after Lady Gresham's death in 1598 it passed to Sir William Reade, her son by a former husband, and was confirmed to him by a new grant from the Crown in 1610. He died in 1621, bequeathing the manor for life to his widow, with remainder to his grandchildren, the three daughters of Sir Michael Stanhope.

It seems probable that the existing house was begun, if not completed, during the lifetime of Sir William Reade. The remarkable ceiling in the drawing-room, which we illustrate, bears the date 1623, and is a very fine example of the decorative plaster-work of the seventeenth century. Its deeply-moulded panelling is in the characteristic strap-work style, so often used in Elizabeth's reign, and the patterns are much enriched and elaborated, the modelling being both bold and effective. The panels have sculptured subjects, representing Sea and Land, War and Peace, various Virtues and other subjects. Few more remarkable ceilings

exist in England, and it may be taken as a very notable thing that, amid the many changes that have passed over the London suburbs, this splendid seventeenth century ceiling should continue to exist at Brentford.



J. Gale.

THE SOLAR ROOM.

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over the stone tower upon which it is built. Here the masonry is exceedingly solid, and the projecting bay or tower has walls of very great thickness enclosing a narrow chamber lighted by loophole windows. This portion of the structure is known



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THE DRAWING-ROOM CHIMNEY-PIECE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

It is associated with the very remarkable mantel, which we also illustrate, and structurally belongs to it. There are the well-known elaborated pilaster-like supports often found in Jacobean work, the terminal figures acting structurally as supports of the rich cornice of the ceiling, which has the egg moulding and a much-enriched cassetto. The panelling, which is well seen in the picture, has a lunette surrounded with fantastic adornment, including figures and grotesque animals, and the motto, "Loyal yet Free." The lunette has a Biblical subject, and depicts in a remarkable manner Abraham preparing to sacrifice Isaac on the mountain in the land of Moriah, stayed by the angel's hand. At the time in which this remarkable room was decorated, the Bible had become a living thing to the people, and legend and annal, war-song and psalm, the voices of prophets, the legends of the Israelite nation, and the parables of evangelists, with apocalyptic visions, had been flung abroad among the people. The stern spirit had come into contact with wider culture, and strongly influenced both literature and art. It touched the internal adornment of mansions, and the curious panel of Boston House is no isolated example of the time.



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DRAWING-ROOM CEILING, DATE 1623.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Lady Reade, during whose occupation these adornments seem to have been added, married, as her second husband, Sir Edward Spencer, Knight, who belonged to the Sunderland family, and who possessed it many years in her right. She outlived him, and died in 1658, after which it came by sale, in 1670, having first been held by one John Goldsmith, to James Clitherow, Esq. He was the fourth son of Sir Christopher Clitherow, who was a prominent member of the East India Company, and had a large share in its voyages, who took part in organising the expedition to discover the North-West Passage—in which it was concerned in the Muscovy Company—had a considerable interest in the operations of the Eastland Merchants, and was master of the Ironmongers' Company, and sheriff and Lord Mayor of London.

It may be presumed that the new proprietor of Boston House, Mr. James Clitherow, added much to its adornment. He was thrice married, and was followed in the possession by his son and grandson. To the latter succeeded his son James Clitherow, LL.D., of Boston House, who was born in 1731,

after whom came his brother Christopher, whose daughter married, in 1819, Mr. John Stracey of Spowston, Norfolk. Boston House thus passed through the female line to the present owner, and long may it continue well preserved and unaffected by the spreading of the metropolitan fringe.

### A HORKY SUPPER

**W**HAT is a horky supper, anyway?" I asked. "This is," I was told. One is reminded of the veteran bowler and his conclusive answer to the amateur. "Why is that kind of ball called a 'yorker'?" He pondered a few minutes. "What else could you call it?" he rejoined, triumphantly. Similarly, what else could a "horky supper" be called but a "horky supper"? From an old inhabitant is elicited the information that the last load carried at harvest was called "horky," and if this be so, then doubtless the supper is the harvest feast still surviving on the home farm. Anyhow, here are all the men employed on the farm, supplemented by a contingent of gardeners and servants from the Hall, meeting, in the old genial fashion, once in the year around a common board.



The squire presides, being supported by the agent, the parson, the architect, and the casual guest. Everyone being duly seated and patiently waiting when the squire arrives, no time is lost in setting to work on the viands provided. Then for a time there is a grim silence, disturbed only by the conversation at the head table, and by the clatter of knives and forks. The Christmas pudding being disposed of, and cheese, for the most part, contemptuously declined, the intellectual part of the evening's programme is commenced with the toast of "The King." This having been duly honoured, the squire rises to make his speech. Having served his oratorical apprenticeship as candidate for a county constituency, he has the knack of addressing this kind of audience. He congratulates them on the success of the year's work on the farm. The flock—a famous one in show-yard annals—has done better than ever, as the long rows of prize-cards which embellish the walls testify. To the shepherd primarily and to others in their degree these achievements are due. In this, as in the dairying and the corn-growing, the best results can only be attained by the loyal co-operation of all. Community of interest is the text of the squire's speech, and he has a practical plan for enforcing the application. He has devised a scheme by which all the men employed on the farm may have a direct interest in its output. For every sack of corn which comes from the machine one penny is put aside as a bonus

to the labourers, and for every hundred gallons of milk given by the cows three halfpence are similarly allocated. The accounts have been made up for the year ending last Michaelmas, and it appears that on this basis there is a sum of £11 12s. 6d. to divide amongst the men. There is great applause at this, and the audience evidently grasp the idea of community of interest quite clearly when it is expressed in terms of pounds, shillings, and pence. A little more about all pulling together and each man doing his best, working with his head as well as his hands, and the squire concludes by giving the comprehensive toast of "Success to Agriculture." Coupled with this are the names of the casual guest, who responds plausibly, and of the agent, who responds practically. The latter concludes by giving the health of the vicar, who, after a few cordial phrases, gives, in his turn, the health of the architect. The squire takes the opportunity to explain that this is practically a house-warming of the new hall which he has built for the village, and he pays a just compliment to the architect, from whose design it was erected. The architect, after a few words of acknowledgment, sings, under protest, a bucolic ditty, and the roof resounds to the cheery chorus of "The Fly be on the Turnuts." An appeal from the chair for volunteer vocalists produces at length a song from the hall coachman, descriptive of the woes of a hen-pecked drayman and valorously contemptuous of his meek submission, which awakens sympathetic echoes in the breasts of the married men present. Chairs are then pushed back, and the distribution of the bonuses is made, the recipients coming up in due order to the squire, who hands to each man his share—10s.

to labourers, 9s. 6d. to cowmen, 7s. 6d. to lads, and 2s. 6d. to boys. This concludes the first part of the evening's programme. The tables are rapidly cleared away, the seats all placed against the wall, and the floor swept and garnished. One thinks of the Fezzewig ball as the wives, the sisters, the cousins, and the aunts come in, until nearly the whole of the adult able-bodied population of the village have arrived to participate actively or passively in the subsequent proceedings. There is, however, no fiddler to "tune like fifty stomach-aches," but in his place an elegant pianola. A few enterprising couples lead the way, but the smooth seductiveness of "The Blue Danube" does not set many feet tripping. A polka proves more inspiring, but still the dancers are shy. The squire's wife comes in for a time, and her presence adds a vivid touch of grace and beauty to the homely scene. But the dancing still lacks enthusiasm, and it seems that the music is found "difficult to dance to." A popular remedy is quickly found in an amateur musician who possesses an accordion. So we shut up the deposited pianola, and the rival instrument starts with a stolid "tum-tum-tum" refrain of endless monotony. This proves as potent as the pipe of the Pied Piper, and in a few moments the floor is crowded with gay couples footing it merrily to their hearts' content. We leave them to continue until midnight, and as we walk back across the park we conclude that a "horky supper" is a function which well deserves perpetuation on its merits, while the "bonus" distribution, as a novel addition to an ancient institution, embodies an economic principle which may be commended to the careful consideration of all who employ agricultural labour.

## THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF NATURE.

NATURE photography is, undoubtedly, difficult, probably one of the most difficult branches of photographic art; I have followed it for years, and I know whereof I speak. From its very nature it can be nothing else, for the living wild animals are shy and not easily approached, and to photograph them, while in their wild state, is anything but an easy task; and yet these difficulties are often exaggerated, and the compensation when one is successful is great enough to be adequate reward for all the trouble. Of course, one must have an inexhaustible stock of patience; must be enduring, ingenious, not easily discouraged, and an expert photographer, before he can hope to enter this field of most interesting work with any assurance of results; but, above all, he must have a thorough working knowledge of the wild life he would portray, for those who go into the woods with the intention of photographing a bird or animal without a knowledge of its habits will return with nothing to show for their labours. Knowing where to look for your subjects is half the battle. I remember once, some years ago, a friend said to me he thought



L. W. Brownell.

MEAL-TIME.

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it no difficult task to find birds' nests, and to prove this he would spend a day in the woods and bring home good results. When he returned he complained that he did not think the birds were breeding yet, for all he could find was one old, deserted hawk's nest. The following day I went over the same ground with him, and succeeded in showing him the nests of sixteen different species of birds, any one of which he could have found had he but known where and how to look for them. This was the difference between knowledge and ignorance of the subject, and serves but to illustrate my point.

It is not, in most instances, a hard task to photograph a nestful of eggs or young, provided you have the nest, but it is oftentimes difficult to find the nest, and he who has no knowledge of the habits of birds will find himself very seriously handicapped. Again, it is not easy to photograph a living wild animal under any circumstances, and when there is no knowledge of its habits it is well-nigh impossible. So my first advice, when anyone asks my methods for his own uses, is, if he does not already know the creatures he would photograph, that he goes out and makes their acquaintance before he attempts to make their pictures.



L. W. Brownell. THE PORCUPINE AT HIS DINNER.

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Feb. 20th, 1904.

Of course this branch of photography is already far past its infancy days. It has long since superseded the brush and pencil in the illustrating of our Nature books, both popular and technical, and publishers everywhere have come to appreciate its value; and the old-time unnatural and often grotesque drawings have given place, almost entirely, to technically perfect and lifelike photographic reproductions. It took time, as was only natural, for this change to be accomplished, for the first attempts of the pioneers in this field were anything but satisfactory; but gradually, as more men

took up this line of work, and the results grew more and more characteristic and true to life, the publishers discovered that they could no longer ignore the claims of these workers, and now one who does not use photographs in preference to drawings is woefully behind the times.

But it is of the fascination rather than the usefulness of this pursuit that I wish to write, for that the pleasure to be derived from it is great, especially to a lover of Nature, is undeniable. As a sport it should be accorded a high place, for all the skill and instinct of a hunter, as well as the knowledge of a naturalist, are required. Moreover, the excitement is fully as great when hunting with a camera as with a gun, and to any humane being a successful shot with a camera should be of greater value than an equally successful one with a gun, and a good photograph of a bird or animal, amid its natural surroundings, worth more than its bloody, shot-riddled, or bullet-torn body. That this is in many instances a fact is evidenced by the number of men, once eager hunters, who have laid aside the gun and now hunt with a camera in its stead. This I know to be true from personal



L. W. Brownell.

A RAVENOUS FAMILY.

Copyright

It is comparatively easy to take a rifle and shoot a deer; it takes no great skill except that of being a good marks-

experience, and it is certain that they obtain fully as much—if not more—pleasure from this newer mode of hunting as from the old and more barbarous style.

Overcoming the oftentimes, apparently, insurmountable difficulties that are continually presenting themselves, is by no means the least of the pleasures to be derived from this source, for where is the able-bodied man or woman who does not enjoy coping with obstacles to gain a coveted goal? And are not the results thus obtained far more worth the having and of far greater value than are those which come to us through no trouble or exertion?



L. W. Brownell.

YOUNG WOODPECKERS.

Copyright

man. But to "shoot" that same deer with a camera, from a point close enough to give a fairly large, clear image, is a different matter, and one requiring the utmost skill and patience. And the picture thus obtained is a lasting souvenir of a pleasant experience; nor does it leave the slightest tinge of regret, for there was never a true sportsman who, seeing the reproachful look in the glazing eyes of the deer he has just shot, does not, in his heart, wish that his bullet had miscarried.

One of the greatest pleasures, however, is the insight, the intimate knowledge, that one is enabled to obtain of the home life of the wild things, for through this new sport, as by no other means, can we become thoroughly acquainted with the inhabitants of our woods and fields, and really know them at their best; and in thus learning to know them our affection for them and love of Nature in general are bound to increase. As a recorder of facts concerning this home life of the wild



L. W. Brownell. MOUTHS CONSTANTLY OPEN. Copyright

creatures there is nothing that can equal the camera, for it seldom lies, whereas the brush or pencil almost invariably does in some detail, and often in larger and more important points. Moreover, the camera reproduces instantaneously that which it would take an artist hours of infinite labour to produce; and, therefore, for this reason alone, if for no other, is the camera invaluable to a student of Nature, no matter in what branch of the natural sciences he may be working.

In photographing birds the breeding season is the best time, for not only can pictures be obtained at this time which cannot be duplicated, at least for another twelve months, but each



L. W. Brownell. YOUNG MILK SNAKE. Copyright

pair of birds are restricted to a comparatively limited range surrounding their nest, and one is always certain of finding one or other at home when he calls. Moreover, birds are more tractable at this period than at any other, owing, no doubt, to the fact that the fear for their own safety is overshadowed by their desire to protect their home and young to the best of their ability.

The fear of mankind is inherent in all birds, and, in fact, all wild animals, but by careful management and gentle treatment this fear can, temporarily, and often to a large extent, be allayed, although, owing to the fact that it has been inborn through so many generations, we can never hope to entirely win their confidence. In the breeding-time, however, as at no other, can we come the nearest to doing this, even, in such cases, to such a degree as might, to the inexperienced, seem almost incredible. This is entirely dependent upon the individuality of the bird, for in many instances I have found it impossible to convince them that I meant neither them nor their home any harm, although I have striven, not only for hours, but actually for days, to prove



L. W. Brownell. A GRACEFUL CREATURE. Copyright

this to them. On the other hand, I have so far won the confidence of a pair of these feathered friends of ours, that they have not only come to their nest and young while I was in close proximity, but have actually perched upon my hand in order to feed their offspring. This I have done repeatedly with different species, some of which have the reputation of being among the shiest of all the members of our avifauna, and it is an experience well worth striving for. When such confidence is placed in us by one of these small brethren of ours, none but the veriest brute, undeserving of the name of man, could violate it.

Of course, young birds, before they are able to fly, are much

more easily photographed than are the old ones, for they cannot escape the evil eye of the lens by flight. They compensate for this, however, to the best of their ability, and show their disapproval of the proceedings of the photographer by being as unresponsive and tantalising as possible, and in this respect they are an undoubted success. Often the patience of a Job is required to pose them, and I have sometimes spent hours working over the young alone before an exposure was made. At such times I have arrived at the conclusion that their chief end and aim in life was to defeat my object. That which they most delight in doing is to fall off the twig or branch upon which one is trying to place them as fast as he can put them upon it. This seems to be through no inability to stand there, for, if they do not actually fall off, and, in falling, drag a companion or two with them, they will deliberately hop off, and then look at you as much as to say, "Well, what are you going to do about it?" And the only thing to do about it is to keep your patience as well as you may until their final consent to stay where you put them. Even then the excitement occasioned by the approach of the old bird with food is usually sufficient to cause one or two to fall to earth. But from all this can be derived a source of pleasure to one who loves the mere state of being in close contact with Nature that, having once experienced, he is anxious to repeat. Not only is this pleasure to be found in photographing the birds, although I am free to confess that



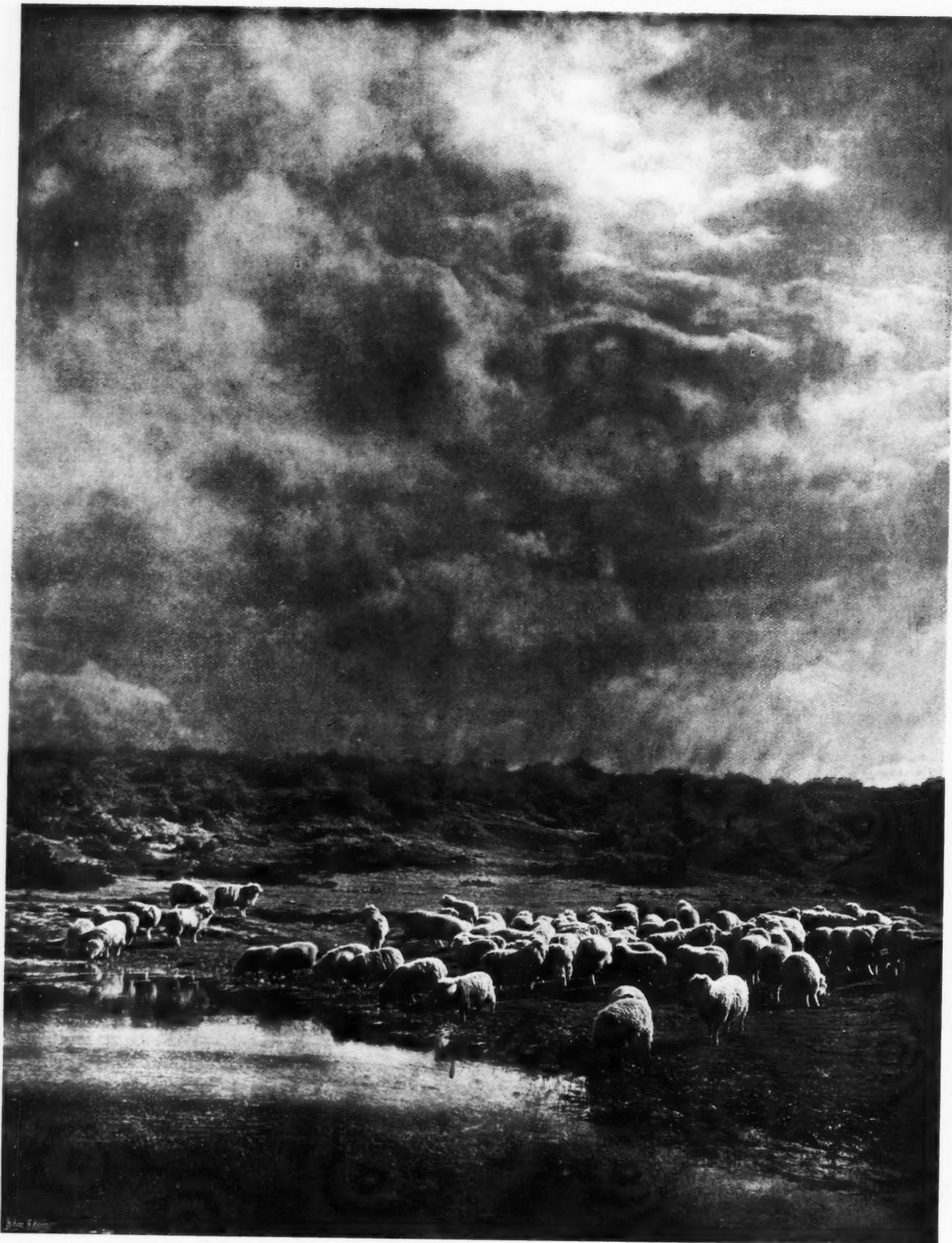
L. W. Brownell. DRAGON-FLY. Copyright

they have, for me at least, the greatest charm, but any and all of Nature's children make interesting subjects, from the lowliest up. Snakes, those much-maligned and pre-eminently graceful creatures, are easily managed if one can overcome his inherent aversion to them, and they make not only interesting subjects, but a closer acquaintance brings a better knowledge that frees one of the old superstitious fear of them, and shows them to be, in most instances, harmless and beautiful creatures.

Next to the birds insects are, to me, the most interesting of all Nature's great family to photograph. Some may think the majority too small to photograph successfully, but this is not true, for there is nothing so small but that it will make a photographic image. Even the microscopic life can, by the aid of a microscopic camera, be enlarged to any size desired, and photographed; but this comes, naturally, under rather a different heading than pure Nature photography. While in following the birds and animals one is taken more to the woods, in attempting to photograph insects, especially the Lepidoptera, one must frequent moors, the fields, and open places; and to him who does not know, let me say that there are no places so prolific of pleasant surprises as the flower-covered marshes and low swampy pieces of land, where the butterflies congregate often literally in thousands, and where one must go would he obtain good pictures of them.

If one has not the time or patience to try his hand at photographing animal life, and wishes for some occupation for

[Feb. 20th, 1904.]



H. P. Robinson.

CLEARING AFTER A STORM.

Copyright

an idle hour, let him take his camera to the haunts of the wild flowers and photograph them as they grow. He can learn more botany by this method in a week than in a year from any book ever written, for he is taking his lessons direct from Nature. I might and could dilate for many more pages upon the fascination and joy which the close communication with Nature that is brought about by the camera used in a proper manner can bring us, but pleasures are always far greater when we discover them for ourselves. So I will merely say, in closing, to him who is bodily and mentally tired from continued contact with the selfish work-a-day world, go to that place, far from the haunts of men, where Nature holds supreme sway; let him take his camera with him, and in trying to catch the fleeting images of some of her children he will forget his troubles and worries, and return rested in body and mind and better fitted for those cares which are our inevitable heritage.

L. W. BROWNELL.

## SMALL HOLDINGS FOR LADIES.

**O**NE of the most interesting questions of the day is that of providing a career for the numbers of women who, whether it be from necessity or from choice, are desirous of making a livelihood for themselves. Of the many branches of employment now open to them, there could be, to our mind, no pleasanter way of earning a livelihood than that of working a small holding. The healthful, open-air life which such an occupation would necessitate is in itself sufficient to recommend it, while to a woman with a real love of Nature, the cultivation and care of plants and trees could not fail to have its charm. Another advantage, too, in favour of the small holding is that as yet there is little competition in this kind of work, and there is no reason why, with a little capital and constant care and attention, such an undertaking should not be successful. In a little pamphlet entitled "Successful Holdings for Ladies" (Ackrill, Harrogate), Mrs. Harriman, who from long experience is quite an authority on the matter, lays down a few general principles, which those who are interested in the subject will find of great value. The first thing, of course, to be done is to settle upon a suitable locality, not far from some populous place that is likely to provide a market for the produce of the holding, at which, if it is to be really successful, not less than three ladies should co-operate. Mrs. Harriman is of opinion that all crops grown in the open should be left out altogether from a commercial point of view. They would, of course, be of great value for home consumption, but vegetable-growing in large quantities is too hard work for women to undertake. For market purposes, at least two distinct departments should be developed, and the aim should be "to make each department yield sufficient to bring in the sinews of war of all the outside needs of the small household." In case, then, of the failure of one crop, there is always the other to fall back upon. The two departments advocated by the author of this little book are the glass-house department and the poultry department. Of these the former, perhaps, offers greater possibilities than any other to the owner of the holding, as if due attention be paid to the fires the climate can be kept under perfect control, and uncertainty in results obviated to a great extent. Two crops at least should be harvested each year, and these should be selected from totally different orders of plants. In the chapter on poultry, Mrs. Harriman offers some very practical advice as to the rearing of hens both for egg-producing and table purposes. A very important point in the management of a small holding, to which the author directs special attention, is "the fullest utilisation of all residuum; and if only sufficient departments are undertaken, the refuse of one department will be found to be the essential food of the other." It would hardly be fair to go more fully into the contents of this excellent little pamphlet, but sufficient has been said to show that, if with a little scientific training is combined patience and watchfulness, a small holding could be made to yield an income sufficient to the needs of the occupier.

## SALMON MIGRATION.

**I**N COUNTRY LIFE of January 16th I wrote an article calling attention to a new theory of salmon migration, suggested to me by Sir Spencer Walpole: that the salmon of to-day, when they reach the sea, travel along the lines of what were the old river-beds in the times of their ancestors; and that this explains, amongst other phenomena, how it is that a great percentage of the fish return to their natal rivers. One of the critics of the suggested hypothesis, Mr. Willis Bund, throws some doubt on the fact that a big percentage of the fish do thus return, but it has never been at all seriously controverted since it was published in the category of the few facts that we really may say we do know about the life history of the salmon. In that category it is stated that "It has also been clearly proved that, in general, salmon and grilse find their way back to spawn to the rivers in which they were bred—sometimes to the identical spot." This is number eleven of the points in the category drawn up by Mr. Cholmondeley Pennell.

By far the most important adverse criticism passed on the theory is that of Mr. Boulenger, perhaps the highest scientific authority in the world, stating his opinion (in the guarded manner, and with the full argument, that the opinion of a scientific man on a controversial point is given) that the salmon was originally a marine and not a fresh-water fish. Mr. Boulenger's

final words are as follows: "Until the geological history of the genus *Salmo* has been placed on a more satisfactory footing than it stands at present, it is, of course, impossible to settle, with any certitude, the question raised by Mr. Hutchinson; but, in my opinion, the facts with which we are already acquainted speak against his suggestion." This is the language of studied moderation; but it is language that, coming from so high an authority, has more weight than the language of dogmatic assertion. Supposing, however, Mr. Boulenger's view to be the correct one (upon which he does not by any means insist), it is still possible that the suggested theory of salmon migration is not affected by it. Mr. Boulenger's researches into the geological indications take us back very far indeed. "No certain remains of salmonids are known older than miocene," he writes, "and these include marine (*Osmerus*) as well as fresh-water (*Thaumaturus*, *Prothymallus*) types," and from the absence of salmonid fossils in miocene fresh-water deposits he argues the marine origin of *Salmo salar*. I hope I am not misstating his argument in presenting it thus. But, granting that the Clupeidae, the remote ancestors of the salmon, as we know him, were marine, this does not seem to show of logical necessity that the more immediate ancestors of the type which we know as *Salmo salar* may not have adopted a fresh-water life. An enormously strong argument, as it seems to me, for the fresh-water origin of the *Salmo salar* is afforded by the fact (given as number one in Mr. Cholmondeley Pennell's category, already referred to, of points definitely known) that "Salmon and grilse invariably spawn in fresh water if possible—both the eggs and the young fry whilst in the parr state being destroyed by contact with salt water." Add to this the fact that salmon can multiply in and replenish fresh water, come to maturity and live out their life in it, without going to the sea at all; and the fact that salt water is absolutely fatal to them at one point (and the most important, because it is the starting-point) of their life, surely furnishes very strong presumption that the type was first developed under conditions of fresh water.

This view, that Mr. Boulenger's research takes us really a little too far back to touch the present problem, is the view taken by Mr. E. Kay Robinson, who proposes an ingenious and attractive amendment to the original hypothesis, namely, that it is not so much the old bed of the river that the fish now follow in the ocean as the fresh-water current flowing out through the sea. It is an amendment that has its attractions. My doubt is whether it will take us far enough, whether we may suppose the current to be perceptible far enough out to sea, whether it does not too soon lose itself in the ocean. But whether or no we accept Mr. Kay Robinson's further idea that the different and warmer temperature of the fluvial current affects the movements of the fish, the main idea is a suggestive one. Of course, all parallels between birds and fish in their migratory movements can be suggestive only; we cannot accept them as analogous, far less as mutually explanatory in any sense; but suggestive they may always be.

A friend who does not wish his name to be published, but who is himself a good keen fisherman and ichthyologist, with whom I have caught many a salmon and discussed many a problem in the salmon's life history, writes to me as follows, in strong support of the suggestion originally advanced: "I used to stay every year with the late Sir John Gibson Maitland, one of the Scotch Salmon Fishery Commissioners, and a man, I believe, who knew more about fish, their habits, and anatomy than any other man in Europe except, perhaps, Dr. Gunther. He told me that the course of the Tweed was *most clearly marked* in the bed of the ocean for sixty miles or so out, that the salmon always kept to this old bed or its immediate neighbourhood, and that great quantities of them were continually caught by setting the nets in the old submarine river-bed."

That reads like very powerful support of the theory suggested by Sir Spencer Walpole. My difficulty about accepting the amendment, attractive as it is in its simplicity, suggested by Mr. Kay Robinson is, that the river currents must widen and diffuse themselves as they go, so that after a while the one lot of fresh water from one river would blend with the water from another, and how could the blend furnish the fish with indications of their course? All these questions are very interesting, and perhaps only one thing is certain about them—that the most foolish spirit in which to speak of them is the most dogmatic. Only those who have studied them but a little, and have small appreciation of their difficulty, will approach them with confidence. Sir J. Gibson Maitland says that the old course of the Tweed is clearly marked in the sea-bed for sixty miles. Any who wish to get an idea of the manner in which the course of rivers must have been curtailed within times that are quite recent, as measured by the standards of time shown in geological records, should look at Professor Boyd Dawkins's "Early Man in Britain," where are one or two maps showing how much farther than at present the salmon would have had to go before reaching the sea at the date when Britain and the Continent were almost joined, and the division between England and Ireland was very much narrower than it is.

Reviewing the whole controversy, so far as it has gone, it does not seem that any argument has been brought forward that

is at all fatal to the acceptance of the newly-suggested theory as a good working hypothesis. It does not seem to conflict with any of the recognised facts, and it seems to explain some of the facts, such as the return of a very large percentage of fish to their natal rivers, better than any other. It is far indeed from proof, which in the case of such a theory is almost more than we can ever hope to obtain; but it is even further from disproof; it explains the known facts better than any previously-advanced hypothesis. And perhaps this is as much as we ought to ask of it.

Since I wrote the first article putting forward the new theory of migration, a singular fact has been communicated to me concerning the Frome. Here the pike have been suffered to increase to a very great extent, and in consequence there are no young salmon—all have been eaten up. This has been going on for several years, and now all the salmon that come up are the big ones, the old ones, the ones born in the river before the pike plague became so bad. Those whose theory it is that salmon do not reascend their natal rivers by preference, will argue that grilse try to get up, but the pike frighten them down again, or eat them. However, that is not an argument that my informant will admit. The pike are not such monsters that a grilse need be afraid of them. His view is that there are no grilse now belonging to the Frome, and no smolts survive to become grilse. There are only the old veterans, who will soon die off, and leave the river salmonless.

I have to confess that the amendment, as I have called it, proposed by Mr. Kay Robinson, receives some support from the fact that during the past year, when the rivers were so constantly in big spate, a bigger number of fish ran up the rivers generally than has been the case for a great many years past. Mr. Robinson may take this as suggesting that the fresh-water influence was thus made sensible to a larger number of fish in the sea than under the conditions prevalent in a year of only average rainfall. It is far from conclusive, as an aid to his argument; but an aid it is. What it does seem to show as conclusively as we can hope to get our verdicts on matters of the kind, is that there are a great number of salmon in the sea that remain there in normal years without ascending to spawn at all. Of course this is no newly-found fact; but there has seldom before been seen such a clear illustration of it. HORACE HUTCHINSON.

## FROM THE FARMS.

### THE PLYWEL.

**A**MONG the many contrivances for helping horses to do their work comfortably and efficiently the Plywel must take a prominent place. An exhibition of the action of the same was given on the 9th inst. at Messrs. Whitebread and Co.'s premises in Garrett Street, E.C., in the presence of between twenty and thirty



A STUDY OF CATTLE.

experts in harness and employers or contractors of van and wagon work. The affair is a very simple little arrangement for fastening on the front of the pole of the carriage, whereby the breast-chain of each horse is carried out at the proper distance in front of him, like a small jibboom, so that when he backs he puts his whole weight into a straight pull back, instead of into a skew pull to the side. Actual trial before the company showed the difference between ordinary backing by a horse and the extra efficiency given by this comparatively small attachment, while a working model, made with a spring balance and two weights of 2lb. each, showed that in imitating the ordinary backing of a horse the two weights only gave a total of 2·8lb, but with the Plywel model they yielded their full 4lb. weight. Those interested in the comfortable harnessing and working of horses in pole vehicles of all sorts should see into this for themselves. It is practically the application of the yoke we see on the poles of mowing and reaping machines to pole carriages of all kinds by means of jointed movable rods. P. Mc.

### MORE RAIN.

The rainfall in February is almost heart-breaking to all who are engaged in agriculture, because the country was so thoroughly soaked with the rains of last year and of January this year, that the water has no way of escape and is now lying on the top. Many of the houses in the Thames Valley are standing in the midst of great lakes, and streams are rushing over their gardens. Elsewhere throughout the country the same story is told of ground so saturated that it is impossible to think of working it. Moreover, farmers are losing hope for the year, since it is not only the present inconvenience they have to face, but the certainty that unless there should come a period of dry atmospheric conditions the land will continue to be absolutely unworkable. Only on a very few of the dry and high-lying farms has there been the slightest progress made up to now. Yet in less than a fortnight we shall be in March, when most of the sowing should be done, only we are afraid that that handful of March dust which is said to be worth a king's ransom will be sought for in vain.

### DAIRY PRODUCTS.

It will be interesting to see if the war in the East produces any effect upon Russian agriculture. During the last two or three years Russia has sprung up into a leading place among those who supply us with dairy products, and she now sends us 24,000 tons of butter per annum, two-thirds of which comes from Siberia. We should imagine, however, that if the people of Siberia were either forced into military service, or, what is still more likely, induced, either by authority or wages, to work on the military railways that are almost certain to be required between there and Manchuria, a check to dairying will be felt. We notice that an expert has given it as his opinion that the war is likely to last six years, and if that were only approximately correct, no doubt a vast amount of construction would be required, and the workmen most readily available would be those small holders who at present supply us with butter. Another point is that the military authorities will probably find it necessary to take possession of the railways in Siberia, in which case the ordinary traffic will either be suspended altogether or very much curtailed. As we write news has come that the lines are already "commandeered." It would thus seem to be very probable that we shall get only a comparatively small quantity of butter from Siberia during the coming season. It may also affect us indirectly, as the Russians also send a vast quantity of butter to Denmark, and this enables the Danes to despatch their surplus to England. In Australia and New Zealand butter-making is recovering from a partial falling off during the last year, which, no doubt, was due to the terrible drought that had prevailed. It is curious to notice that the prices both in Australasia and Denmark continue very close to the level they attained two years ago.

### A STUDY OF CATTLE.

SIR,—This photograph was taken last autumn at a small shooting lodge in Inverness-shire, where the photographer had many studies of animal life in the near vicinity of the house. The cattle at first seemed shy, which no doubt was owing to their youth, an unusual thing in the Highlands, where generally they wish to be too familiar; and it is advisable to be on the other side of a good barbed wire fence. The great difficulty in photographing the cattle was the interest shown by two brood mares and their foals in the Kodak, and which had to be treated with caution. The surrounding scenery is some of the prettiest in Inverness-shire, and on the top of the hill, to the left of the photograph, is an old vitrified fort.—E. H. Ross.

### NEW AND OLD SEED POTATOES.

At Garforth in Yorkshire experiments have been carried on for some time for the purpose of showing the difference between old and new potatoes when used as seed, and the published results will prove of value to the farmer, especially as the experiments have been continued over a sufficient number of years to enable one to come to a decision on the matter. Practically, a good deal of what has been found out was acted upon before, as expert potato-growers throughout the country have known quite well that seed procured from a distance is better than that grown on the farm for a few years. The comparison between new seed obtained from the same grower and old seed used for the fourth year came out as follows: Old seed British Queen gave 11 tons 16cwt. to the acre, and new seed 13 tons 12cwt. 2qr.; old seed Challenge gave a little over 9 tons, and new seed 13 tons; old seed of Conquest gave about

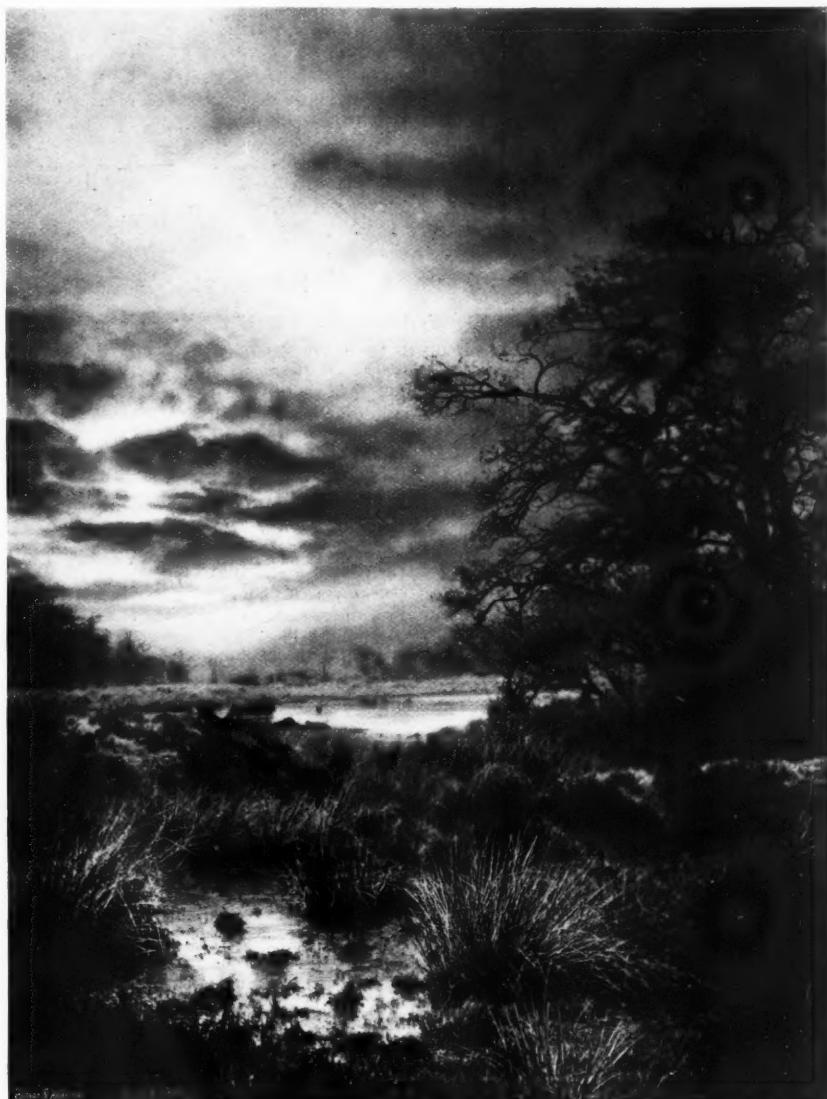
9 tons, and new seed close on 12 tons; old seed of Eighty-fold 7 tons, and new seed 11½ tons. Almost more important is the fact that new seed is practically immune from disease. In fact, there was not a single diseased potato from it in 1903, whereas in old seed the percentage of diseased tubers ranged from 13 to 33. It is important to notice that the deterioration seems to begin with the second year, so that in really high cultivation change should be annual, or, as the report says, "too great importance cannot be attached to a change of seed. It may be that the same stock should not be used on the same farm for more than three years, and preferably for only two." And further, "new varieties may be relied on as being less liable to disease, but even these, after one or two seasons in a district, seem to become less immune."

## THE LATE . . . CANON AINGER.

**B**UT the other day, in a bookseller's second-hand list, I read the following legend—"Sir Walter Scott's Life of Napoleon, a new uncut copy, in nine volumes, 7s. 6d."—and reading this pathetic advertisement reminded me in a moment of a recent (or comparatively recent—previous to any sign of the illness which was so soon destined to be fatal) talk with the late Canon Ainger, in which he was lamenting, as who would not, that Scott wasted his splendid powers as a story-teller and character-drawer on the compilation of this Life of Napoleon, in nine volumes, which evidently, and rightly, no one ever reads, cuts, or even buys. Seven and sixpence! Something below a shilling for the volume! And almost coincidentally with reading the advertisement that recalled my talk with Ainger, came the news that he was no more. The news was not unexpected. His illness had been serious for some while; but the frail body had made so gallant and prolonged a fight that one was encouraged to have a good hope, until at last the end came rather swiftly, and there was no more hope and no more fighting—only peace.

The name of Ainger, *tout court*, by which the late Master of the Temple was very commonly called, was one that suggested a singular and interesting personality to a very large number who knew him chiefly as Reader or Master at the Temple Church, or as officiating in the canonry at Bristol. To the smaller, but still very considerable, number of those who had the privilege of his friendship, the suggestion of his name was of a personality in which loveliness was the chief characteristic. To the circle that is acquainted with him only through his writings, his principal claim on their affectionate interest is that he was the biographer and commentator of Charles Lamb. It does not appear to be essential to the success of sympathetic biography that all the opinions of biographer and subject respectively should be in sympathy. How, if this were an essential, should we have Mr. Morley at so high a level in the lives of Cromwell and Mr. Gladstone, with each of whom religious conviction was the moving impulse of conduct? The points of difference, rather than the points of likeness, between the writer and his hero are obvious, too, in the greatest of all biographies, Boswell's of Johnson. Nevertheless, it hardly is to be thought that likeness and sympathy between the two that are in that relation can make for anything but the success of the biographical sketch, and never, probably, have they existed between two persons thus mutually situated in fuller perfection than between Ainger and Charles Lamb. Both in character and disposition the likeness was striking. In each there was the same tender sympathy, the same delicacy of taste, the same cultivated and yet very human humour. Ainger was, perhaps, the more social being of the two, in a wider sense social and gregarious. His friends were many, and it is hard to conceive a circle in which he would not have been a welcome and a cheering guest. It is given to few perhaps to combine with the late Canon Ainger's high appreciation of what is best in literature, so wide an appreciation of almost all phases of humour. Delighting chiefly in the delicate subtlety of Lamb, he loved in only less degree the broader humour of Hood and of Dickens; nor do I think that the latter's sentimentality offended him as much as it has offended other critics whose fastidiousness in general has been no

greater. He enjoyed to the full the humour of the streets, the repartee of cabby and of 'busman. It was he who first told me the following story, that may by now be a classic (or, in the American tongue, chestnut), of the collision in a block between the 'bus and the four-wheeler: "Now then," exclaimed the 'bus-driver to the man of the "growler," "where are you a-coming to with that there rabbit'-utch?" On which the "fare" within the four-wheeler, a man of no little majesty and self-importance, put



C. F. Gare.

A FROSTY EVENING.

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his head out of the window and said in most fussy tones to the 'busman: "Now I've seen the whole incident. I am ready to report on the whole thing. It is entirely you that are to blame." To which the 'bus-driver blandly: "'Ello, bunny, is that you?" Majesty and self-importance are with difficulty maintained under stress of the retort courteous of such subtlety.

Yet more pointed in its delicacy of suggestion was another repartee retailed to me also by Ainger from the late Sir Andrew Clarke, the doctor. The latter's coachman ran his carriage, with no dangerous violence, into the side of a 'bus; whereon the driver of the 'bus, leaning over from his box, enquired of Sir Andrew's coachman with an affectionate interest: "And 'ow do you like London?"

It says something for the quickness of perception of the "man in the street" that this sally was not wasted, and that the ready laugh arose. But, in point of fact, Sir Andrew's coachman knew London probably better than any 'bus-driver, whose routes were marked for him. Truth, however, is but a small factor in the merit of repartee.

Did the humorous story possess a little spice of naughtiness, that, it is to be said, was but a reason the more for the *raconteur's* appreciation of it; and it was from Ainger, who told all stories well, that I first heard of the reply to the bishop who checked a man for swearing at his horse. "My good man," said the shocked ecclesiastic gravely, "where did you learn that language?" "You can't learn it," was the reply, given in the tone of one sorry to disappoint an intelligent enquirer. "It's a gift!"

Canon Ainger excelled alike in the telling of the humorous

stories for which he had an appreciation so delightful, and in reading and recitation of a more serious kind. Listening to his skilful rendering of intricate passages of Browning's poetry, he seemed to make a clear meaning leap to the sense from much that had been mysterious before, and one began to ask one's self whether the brilliant author of the essay on the "Alleged Obscurity of Browning" had not reason in his choice of title. And from Browning I have heard him pass to a reading of "The Ancient Mariner," giving an indescribable eeriness and creepiness to that blood-curdling narrative. I have always thought that if the public had not known Canon Ainger in the pulpit of the Temple Church, it would have known him on the boards of a leading theatre, but whether in a house of tragedy or of comedy I have never confidently made up my mind. He might, like Garrick, have won equal praise in both.

He had that most precious gift of sympathy, which is only another facet of the gem-like quality that exhibits humour as its most brilliant ray—the gift which is so essential to the artist of every kind, and which makes him who has it so invaluable a friend of man, woman, or child. And as in literature, so, too, in music; Canon Ainger combined to a rare degree cultured appreciation of the best with a keen enjoyment of the less elaborate and the more generally popular.

We shall see no more that slight, rather pathetic, yet always striking and interesting figure, with the silvery white hair, the small face bearing the lines of suffering and yet of the noble cheerfulness by which the brave spirit overcame the frailty of the delicate frame. There is an empty place in the heart of many a friend.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

## SORROW ON THE WIND.

By FIONA MACLEOD.

"There's sorrow on the wind, my grief, there's sorrow on the wind!" GIVE here, in narrative form, a story of two, one of whom I knew. And some will know "Father Angus," from whom also I heard it. Rury Macarthur died over a year ago, but not in his own place. He had gone away after

Maev left, and settled behind the mainland coast, on an inland-lying farm, where the cry of the seamew never came, and where, even from the last ridges of the upland, the grey line of the sea never wavered on the horizon. "It was the wet, poor land and the loneliness out yonder that brought him here," the neighbours said. But I, who knew him, think that there was in his mind another reason also. It is for that I credit the singular story of a herd-lad, who said his master could never abide the crying o' peewits, and that he had time upon time seen him lift an arm and shake it at the score or more wheeling lapwings, saying at them swift, hoarse words in Gaelic; but that once, when a single peewit kept drifting and wailing above him as he walked up Netherton Brae, the tears were coming out of his eyes and down his face, like an old woman crying silently in the gloaming.

"Why will you not give up the girl, Rury?" asked Father Angus McLan, as he and Rury Macarthur walked along the grey machar, in the fading hours of a chill July day, which had been all noise of wind and thin crying lash of rain, and the endless wailing of mew and tern, with the desolate and lonely *sruch* of the tide-lifted or tide-left wrack and the dull wave beating.

"Why will you not give up the girl? She has no heart, they say, and it would only be sorrow you'd be having if you took her to your hearthside."

Rury Macarthur made no answer, but walked on, his grey eyes staring out across the long thistled greyness of the sandy machar, and upon the dull grey and wan green of the tumbling sea, that sometimes seemed like a flood coming swift across a narrow, down-borne ridge, and sometimes was like an idle and formless mist being furtively rolled back and mysteriously gathered by obscure withdrawing hands.

"I'm not denying she has the fine looks, Rury; indeed, an' it's true, that she has the song and music of beauty. There is no other girl in Barra like Maev, just as I don't know one there, or in any of the home-isles, that has the old name either. But she doesn't want marriage, you say; nor to leave her grandmother, who is old and blind; and for this and for that, an' I know not what all."

"She doesn't wish the thought of going away from the sea," said Rury, dully. "It isn't the grandmother, no nor yet marriage. I would have old Dionaid Maclean with no thought but gladness; and Maev, if she hasn't the hawk's-hunger for me, hasn't her thought on any other. It's not that, Father Angus. It's the sea-water. It's because I have my croft away up yonder in the hollow of the great strath. There's nought but leaning heads of hills—north, south, east, an' west; an' moorland an' bog sloping up against them. You will not have sight of the sea from any place on Tynacreggan: no, not if you go up above the summer-shielings, but at one place only, and that will be at the Cave of the Wailing Woman, on the south-east shoulder of Sliavgorm; and Maev will not come to that loneliness of Tynacreggan—no, that she will not."

"Loneliness? Why the girl lives at the very heart of it—not a croft near, in the wildness of this machar of the west. Loneliness at Tynacreggan! Why there are five or seven crofts within sight of you, and Donald Maclellan's big farm, and not a mile from your door is the clachan of the Kern, it that would be calling itself a *bailie* but for the fear the crows would fly with the big news to the Morair's factor."

"Well, an' that may be, an' is so, Father Angus. But it's

loneliness for Maev. She has the wave of the sea in her heart. Aye, that's it. She has a wave in her heart. She hears the tides as you hear the church-bell of Our Lady of the Sea. You wouldn't be without the good sound of the bells, Father Angus; and if you were in a place where there would not be the holy bells, no not once, you would be listening to them in your sleep, and at this hour, and at that, you never knowing when or how, but something in you suddenly saying, *Whisht*. An' if any day you heard them in the glen, or on the moor, or on the slope of the hill, or by the byres maybe, aye, or in your room with book and oil-lamp beside you, would you not start an' be on your feet with the beating heart in you, and your eyes like a stoat's in the dark, smelling the wind? Aye, you would have the restlessness, you would, and the fever; and then, or if not then, soon, aye, soon, or late, you would rise and go away. You would follow the call of the bell. Aye, Father Angus, an' that is a true word; and what that call of the bell would be to you the sound of the water, an' the whisperin' of the waste, and all that's in the sea for good and evil (*peace to it the good sea, I'd say no evil of it, or of any whose place it is*) aye, all that, and more, is the sea-call to Maev."

"It's all a dream, Rury. The girl's a bit fey with youth and loneliness."

"Dream or no dream, Father Angus, it's a daylong sorrow for me. I asked her to come up to Tynacreggan an' I would give her all I could an' be asking no more than she cared to give. There's no need for her to work at what she has not the liking for. There's Morag an' Sheen an' Mary to do all that's needed. 'You've a peewit's heart,' I said to her, 'an' I don't want to be lyin' beside you at night, listening to the wind and fearing that if I sleep you'll be up and away on wild wings.' She laughed at that. 'It's not a peewit's heart I have,' she said, 'but the heart of a tern. You might blow a breath and I'd drift to your feet like flyin' bog-cotton, with a sigh an' a cry; an' if it's another wind or breath that blows then I drift away like bog-cotton, too, an' with a sigh an' a cry, an' it's to the shore I go, to the shore in the dark, where there's nothing but blackness and noise of water an' whiteness of foam. An' there you cannot come, Rury, no, not for all your lovingness. No, no, the peewit to the moor, and the tern to the saltiness an' wildness of the water. Give me a peewit's heart, an' I'll come to Sliavgorm, I'll come to your hidden moors!' An' I pleaded an' argued, Father Angus, but no word more than that could I get. . . . 'Give me a peewit's heart, an' then I'll come to your hidden moors.'"

"Well, and have you not asked again? The girl's thought may have changed. You know the way the herring have; for a score years, it may be, they will come from the wildness on the sea round one headland, and in the same week of the same month; and then all of a sudden, when the boats are dapping the haven, they sink fathoms deep, and take a veer like a scythe going through green grass, and are gone like a shadow, and will not be seen again for weeks maybe, for months, perhaps, perhaps not for years on years. It's their way. And there's women as incalculable as that."

"Yes, Father Angus, an' for sure I have, an' again an' again, too. And it was only three days ago that I went to her for the last time. I said it was for the last time, and she said that was well, for she could never have any word more to put upon that thing between us. Old Dionaid is passing swift, she said, and when that is come which cannot be long coming, then she will go away. She has the thought of the lonely islet in her mind, I know; the little bit of rock and grass out yonder that's called Eilean Caorach. She said once she would be glad to be there alone for a time. And then, when she goes away to the great towns, the mainland towns, or the English towns, or in the Americas—for go she will, and be lost and broken like a wounded

seamew, and sink and be sucked down like that seamew; oh, yes, I know that well, as a man hears death whispering a long time before the cry and the silence—when Maev will go away to these towns, and with the man she loves then, or dreams she loves, or with one who will master her and have her secret anger, then all that's in and around Eilean Caorach, and all about Ardnatooon, where she now is, will be in her heart, like moonlight in a pool of water. For her heart's of water."

"What were her words, Rury?" asked Father Angus, quietly.

"They would be like this," Rury answered, after a pause. "They would be like this: 'Put your trouble away, *Ruaridh a gradach*. Give it to the peewits up at Tynacreggan, but don't be hearing them calling my name for ever and ever. I loved you, I thought, but I have not that thought on me, now. But it would not matter—no, it would not matter. You told me I had a wave of the sea in my heart. I'm not knowing that, nor why, nor the meaning to it. But it may be. I can't love you, for you have a heart like a mountain. It would always be there: I could never get out of sight on it. There would be no going this way and that way. It is a good mountain—but, oh yes, I have the wave in my heart. I cannot be staying ever in one place, Rury. No, that I cannot. I could not be living month in month out at Tynacreggan. Where would I be for the sea? There is no water up there. But you would have gladness to be living here, anywhere—yes, yes, I know that, *caraid dileas*, but there's no change in you. There's no wave of the sea in your heart. You have not the understanding of all this, Rury? No, nor is it with me any better. But I cannot be living here any more. In the time of the sorrow that's coming it's to Port-na-long I'll go, to sail away, and I shall not be back again: no, never here. It is no sorrow I am wishing you: peace be with you. Forget.' And that was all."

"Well, Rury, I have the true sorrow for you. It's a hard thing to be in the fowler's snare, as the saying is. What old tale is there that is not full of the sighing an' sorrow of vain love and wild beauty that's like a flame leaping in the wind an' falling away to ashes and black grief?"

"Aye, it is a hard thing, Father Angus."

The two walked on awhile, in silence. The grey hour grew dusky with thick shadow, though there was no night there in Barra, at that season: only, in times of gloom and storm, a coming of dull shadow into the half night and half day.

A guillemot flew with rapid whirring scream overhead. The harsh cries of scarts came from the weed-covered rocks at the sea's edge. Terns drifted past like flying foam, with a wail that fluttered behind their flight as a blown feather idly whirled in the wake of the wind. From the peat bog beyond the machar, they could hear cries and sounds that might be the drumming of snipe or the harsh screech of the solander or the melancholy flute of the binne-bheul, but were not quite as these are, coming as they did out of a gloom full of menace and the obscure furtive ways of untrodden morass.

Father Angus sighed as he thought of the smallness of the little island-world that was all in all to him and his. How vast and grey and illimitable seemed the long machar, how vaster and sadder and more illimitable the sea beyond, how vast and shadowy the inland hills. The lifting of a Hand, nay, but the least breath of the Unknowable, and these hills would be as blown dust, and the machar as a handful of ground sand, and the great sea no more than a cup of water spilt and thrown upon the wind. How futile all human longing, all passion of the heart, all travail of the spirit, beside this terrible reality of wind and vastness, of wind baying like a hound in a wilderness—a wilderness where the hound's voice would fall away at last, and the hound's shadow fade, and infinitude and eternity be beyond and above and behind and beneath.

But in Rury's heart there was only a hatred of the blind forces. He did not know them, nor what they did, and even in his secret mind he did not put his hatred upon them. That would be to bring swift evil upon him. They hear, the everlasting ones. They hear a whisper in the dark: the wise will keep even thought of them screened from the proud unrelenting eyes. But in his heart he hated them. It was they who put a wave of the sea between him and all his hopes. If Maev were a woman as other women—perhaps, even, he thought, if he could love as other men—But, no; it was their will that some should be children of the water, and no love and no hope and no supplications would avail—no, not till the whole world was drowned in the sea, or till the sea was gathered to the leaning lips of the sky, as the sun sucks the midsummer dew.

The night-wind rose out of the west. In the vastness of shadowy gloom over sea and land it moved like a lamenting voice—a creature blind and without form, homeless, seeking what is not to be found, crying sometimes, as a lance slanting on the wind, an ancient sorrow; deepening sometimes in an immense, gathering, multitudinous sound, as though the tides of night broke against the shores of the stars.

## A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

**M**R. R. E. PROTHERO has discovered as interesting as it is a difficult subject for a book in *The Psalms in Human Life* (Murray). Internal evidence would have shown that it is a work of many years, if we had not his own word for it in the preface, where he says that as long ago as 1878 some of the notes for it were discussed with so eminent an authority as the late Dean Stanley, who himself had drawn up a list of historical instances of the use of the Psalms. Perhaps at the outset we may be permitted to say that Mr. Prothero would have done even better if he had used his notebook to collect instances in private life. It is a curious fact in psychology that a man under very great excitement will often find a certain relief in repeating choice passages of poetry. Most of us remember that dreadful scene on the wild Afghan hills in the early part of last century, when nearly all the British station was murdered, and one or two ladies only with a few men escaped. All who were there remembered ever after how one of the women kept repeating a line from Campbell. It is a fair surmise, too, that the most beautiful of the Border Ballads received those final touches of infinite pathos as they were repeated by broken and wounded men retiring from the conflict, the ardour of battle scarcely yet subsided in their blood, and yet beginning to mingle with the passion of pain and regret. Surely, too, some of those women's ballads must have come from a woman's agony. The expressions, even after we have heard them a thousand times, still breathe the very essence of passion and sorrow:

"Wi' ae lock of his yellow hair  
I'll chain my heart for evermair."

Or again :

"O, little did my mither ken,  
That day she cradled me,  
The lands I was to travel in,  
The death I was to dee."

There are certain minds that turn almost automatically in distress, either of mind or body, to scraps of verse like this, even as some have been known when facing death to whistle a favourite snatch of music. It is a tribute to the Psalms to say that they fulfil this want as scarcely any other good poetry does; and, indeed, the great poets have all assimilated the Psalms till they became "flesh of their flesh, bone of their bone."

Of these Milton stands out as an example ready to hand. His beautiful version of Psalm CXXXVI. is a classic :

"Let us with a gladsome mind  
Praise the Lord for he is kind,  
For His mercies aye endure,  
Ever faithful, ever sure."

And throughout the finest passages in "Paradise Lost" we are continually meeting with echoes from the muse of David. With Milton's version it is interesting to compare Joseph Addison's well-known version of Psalm XXIII., "The Lord my pasture shall prepare," and the still more beautiful one of Psalm XIX., "The spacious firmament on high." Mr. Prothero gives a great number of interesting examples to show the influence that the Psalms have had on modern poets. When Byron was a boy at Aberdeen he learnt many of the Psalms by heart, and paraphrased the fifty-fifth, of which we quote the last verse :

"Oh, that to me the wings were given,  
Which bear the turtle to her nest!  
Then would I cleave the vault of heaven  
To flee away and be at rest."

But the most beautiful description of psalm-singing was given by Wordsworth :

"Mournful, deep, and slow  
The cadence, as of psalms—a funeral dirge!  
We listened, looking down upon the hut,  
But seeing no one; meanwhile from below  
The strain continued, spiritual as before;  
But now distinctly could I recognise  
These words: 'Shall in the grave thy love be known,  
In death thy faithfulness?'"

Tennyson puts one of the most resonant lines into the mouth of a rustic: "Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord." Arnold and Browning were saturated with knowledge of the Psalms, and of course Elizabeth Barrett Browning made a line from them the theme of one of her stateliest pieces of verse :

"Of all the thoughts of God that are  
Borne inward into Souls afar,  
Along the Psalmist's music deep,  
Now tell me if that any is,  
For gift of grace surpassing this:  
He giveth His beloved—sleep?"

Naturally Carlyle, with his strong sense of what belonged to humanity, loved the Psalms. "David's life and history," he says, "as written in those Psalms of his, I consider to be the truest emblem ever given of a man's moral progress and warfare here below."

## TWO FOOTBALL MATCHES.



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CAMBRIDGE SCORE ANOTHER GOAL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE two football matches of which we give illustrations to-day were played on Saturday. One was the International Rugby, England against Ireland, in which England won after a game that was splendid, especially in the last quarter of an hour, by two goals and three tries to nothing. The early part of the game was not considered to be a very fine exposition of Rugby science. A strong wind was blowing, and though the Irishmen had it in their favour, they were unable to take much advantage of it. This was the only chance they had, because as soon as sides were reversed the English team had no difficulty in making their superiority felt. If their first score was something of a fluke, every critic will concede that in the latter half of the game they showed excellent combination and tactics. The other match was the annual struggle between Oxford and Cambridge Universities under Association rules. It begins the trials of strength between the two Universities that will in one form or another go on from now till after Easter. Cambridge exhibited so great a superiority as to leave no room for doubt which is the better team. She won by five goals to none, and that this was no mere piece of luck is fairly well proved by its accordance with the form shown in the trial matches. The Varsity men, like the other two teams, suffered very much from the wind, which was blowing strongly during the whole of the play, and made skilful and adroit passing very difficult indeed. It seemed to disconcert the players till after Cambridge succeeded in winning the first goal, and then they settled down to a struggle that never ceased to be

interesting. The weakness of Oxford lay in the half-backs, and the forwards, though little fault could be found with them, did not show the sound and interesting combination that distinguishes their opponents.

It may, and no doubt will, be asked why, out of the many football matches played during the season, we choose to show photographs of these and these only. The answer is not far to seek. Whether footballers be "muddled oafs" or not, certain it is that the majority of the great matches are no more than gladiatorial combats. The difference between them and, say, the University teams is not difficult to establish. A University football player, a University cricketer, or a University rower is not removed in any way out of his class. He is, after all, on the average just a little better than the majority. What he does may fairly be attempted by every young man who wishes to give a proper amount of attention to athletic exercises without serious interference with the time devoted to study. We say this notwithstanding the reproach frequently levelled both against the public schools and the colleges that the mere athlete is made too much a hero of. In some cases it may be true that he lives chiefly for cricket and any other games in which he may be interested, but even then there is a mighty distinction between him and the mercenary, who for hire keeps his muscles in good trim and plays his game for a fee. That is entirely the wrong spirit to import into games, and it would be extremely serviceable if anyone could analyse the motives that bring in many cases thousands of spectators to see a trial of



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PLAY IN MID-FIELD AT QUEEN'S CLUB.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

skill between two equal bands of paid professionals. At bottom it will be found that they are attracted to witness the football match just in the same way as they are lured to a contest of strength between the foreign wrestlers who have been figuring in the music-halls. A great football match does far less than is supposed to propagate the love of outdoor games and exercises. We have often watched the crowds who go there, and in no way do they differ from the spectators who used to collect round a prize-fight, and now may be seen at every great race. Perhaps the only thing that professional football can claim over horse-racing is that it does not give rise to quite so much betting; but that is the most it can lay claim to. Professional football is, in point of fact, inimical to the kind of pastime that is of value to the country. The national bone and muscle are strengthened not by these vulgar exhibitions, but by the amount of football played by the ordinary citizen, who would frankly think it a waste of time to give the best of his attention to this pastime. Needless to say, we are out-and-out favourable to athletic exercises in the open air;

but it is much more gratifying—and, we cannot help thinking, much more conducive to the welfare of the country—to see the game played under natural surroundings. Some two or three years ago, the present writer, for his instruction and edification, made a walking tour through Germany, at a time when there was a great outcry about German competition, but mentally it was impossible not to help contrasting the unhealthy manner in which the German was brought up as compared with the Englishman.

On going into a village or town in the evening one found not only the fathers and mothers of families, but the sons and daughters, assembled in beer-gardens, where they sat lazily and listened to music much of which was discoursed

through far more manual exercises both in school and at home, and secondly, he has his period of drill; but as the Japs said when they saw the Germans in China, there is too much drill, drill. In games there is a certain morality, not discoverable in drill or exercises. The latter tend to make a man automatic, and do things like a machine, whereas success in the former depends upon initiative, enterprise, self-reliance, and other qualities that emphatically go to the making of a man. Of course it is always unsafe to prophesy unless you know; but as far as human insight can penetrate, it seems to be evident that the German person is carrying his drill and his mathematics, his formula, and his rule of thumb much too far. In our own country there may be a certain danger. The vast crowds that come to look at football matches without taking part in them are doing neither the players nor themselves any good. They are exactly in the same position as those who gathered in the Roman circuses to see men combat one another with javelin and retiarius. They would, in truth, be very much better engaged if they

were doing anything else in the open air, and the professional himself is merely turned into a loafer. He soon develops a great contempt for honest work of any kind, and two careers only become practicable to him. The professional player of some games is able to open a shop for selling the various implements required in his mystery. In the alternative, as the lawyer says, he takes a public-house, and, waxing fat on the proceeds of intoxicants, learns to prose of his own great deeds in the past while unfitting the present to emulate them.

If that is too sweeping a verdict to pass on the professional, it is only because in one or two pastimes it is possible for him to earn a little money by teaching the game, and of course this at least is an honest and creditable employment. The more



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A LINE OUT AT BLACKHEATH.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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ENGLAND GETTING AWAY BEAUTIFULLY.

"COUNTRY LIFE"

by girls in white apparel. Now, beer is good and gardens are good, and, in their own time and place, girls are good; but taken together as a means of spending the evening they do not help to make muscle nor to give strength. Now, contrast with this what one may see at any time in the English country districts. Outside the little town, or on the village green, or in a neighbouring field, the young men will be seen engaged in hard muscular exercise. In winter their attention will be devoted to football, and in summer in their white flannels they will be seen plying bat and ball or hard at work on the river. No doubt the German answer to this is twofold. In the first place, he goes

we have who can play games, the better for the country, but at the same time the more we have who give up their whole lives to a pastime, the worse it is for us. Latterly there have been observed many symptoms of what is probably the truth, that England is growing a little weary of the professional exponents of the game. It has been found that many, once accepted as heroes, are very common clay indeed, and though a certain respect will ever be due to those who are best of their kind at anything, be it cricket, or Graeco-Roman wrestling, this can scarcely continue to be paid to those others who, without being eminent, earn their livelihood by professing to be so. In

football this state of affairs exists to an extent that can scarcely be called other than scandalous, with the result that only crowds of a certain class care to witness the very popular football matches.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### FEEDING FOXES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your hunting notes of last week you refer to some of the many difficulties of a master of foxhounds. Among them you mention the friction which often arises with the neighbouring landowner who preserve game. One means of avoiding this, to a very great extent, is to feed the foxes when they are rearing a litter of young. It is at this season that more damage is wrought in game coverts than at any other. In the first place, the vixen has a greatly-increased number of mouths to fill; and, secondly, game birds are also rearing their young, and are, therefore, in a more or less defenceless condition. The number of young pheasants a fox will carry off in one night if he gets among the coops where they are being reared is positively appalling, not to mention the wanton destruction he often does—killing birds for killing's sake. It is small wonder that an exasperated keeper occasionally does away with one or two of the marauders. If, however, a huntsman takes the trouble to find out where every litter of cubs in his country is to be found, and makes arrangements with the keeper on whose beat the earth is situated to feed them near home, a great deal of this sort of thing will be avoided, and the poultry bill will also be greatly diminished. If the huntsman is a man of tact, he can generally convince the keeper that it is to their mutual benefit to assist him in this, and if he succeeds in doing so, the expense to the Hunt will be very small. An occasional rabbit and the vermin which the keeper kills thrown down in the vicinity of the earth is all that is required. Some people assert that a fox will not eat anything left near his earth, very suspicious "old customers" may object, but I have fed more than one litter through a whole season.—KEEPER.

### TIPPING OF KEEPERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There is a point in a recent article in your paper on the shooting at Woolverstone, that is of great interest to all shooting men. It has to do with the tipping of keepers. Therein it is suggested, as the most excellent way of all, that there should be no tipping, but that the host should pay his keepers an extra sum to cover the estimated tips. I quite believe that is the best way of all. I believe it is a practice of which the expense would not be felt by anyone, because hosts are in general fairly well-to-do, and also become in their turn guests, and if a circle of shooting friends were to make up their minds that all of them would pursue the same plan, the money spent in one place would be saved in the other; and why, after all, should a man's friends help to pay his servants for him? Why should he not pay them for himself? However, this is not the point in the article to which I chiefly wished to draw attention. That point is this—it is said that it has been known for a

millionaire shooter to come up to one with a few hundreds a year and ask him what was the right thing to give the keeper. This is said rather as if it were a base thing for the rich man to do. In the instance in point it may have been so. Some rich men are very mean, and this one may really have wanted to see for how little he could get off with decency. But there is another possible interpretation to be put on his question. He may have meant, "What is the right thing to give, because I do not want to overdo it?" If this was his meaning his question would have been one of delicate good taste. There is nothing more horrible than the way that you will sometimes hear a rich man say with a wink, "Yes, I got some very good stands; you see, I always give the keeper a jolly good tip." This means, in the first place, that the host commits the offence of letting the keeper place the guns, and, in the second place, that the guest has committed the far more gross offence of over-tipping the keeper, out of his superfluity, so as to have an advantage over his fellow-guests. The extraordinary bad taste and gross selfishness of such behaviour is hardly to be believed, but we see the thing done, and actually confessed, by people who would claim for themselves the name of Christian gentlemen. It is almost incredible, but so it is. Therefore I wished to write and point out that it is possible that a better interpretation than the most obvious one might be placed on the question asked by the rich man, as quoted in the article; and that it might have been inspired by a feeling that we should like to see more universal. Another question lately raised as to why the guns that are back all day should be expected to "tip" the same as the guns that have the forward stands is also an interesting one. The best solution of it all would be the first idea propounded, that the host should pay his own servants, without expecting help from his guests. —M. B.



M. Emil Frechon.

A PORTABLE HAND-MILL.

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subject, I am sending you some prints from Algeria, showing how the quern is still constantly employed there. The first picture represents a portable hand-mill, such as the nomadic tribes of South Algeria carry about with them on their wanderings, and which when they are moving about is strapped to one of their camels or donkeys. The other is an example of a fixed hand-mill in an interior used by one of the mountain tribes. These people have no Arab blood in their veins at all, but are the descendants of certain inferior nations of the South mentioned by the Latin historians. The grinding of corn in ancient times was considered a menial and degrading employment, and it generally (as we have abundant evidence in Scripture) fell to the share of the women. Nor can the duty have been a light one, for it requires a good deal of strength to work such a mill as the one in the picture. However, if we may take the women as examples of their kind, pity would be wasted on them, for they look well able to cope with even heavier tasks. It is curious that while this form of mill survives, the old Roman form, which was a double cone with handles so that it could be turned by human or animal power, is now entirely extinct, though a great number have been found in old Roman ruins in Europe and Africa. Among the ancient Romans the pestle and

### THE QUERN IN NORTH AFRICA.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—In a recent number of COUNTRY LIFE you published a very interesting letter with some excellent photographs having reference to the use of the quern in the Orkney Islands. It is difficult to believe that in this age of ultra-civilisation such an ancient and primitive implement should still survive, but not only is this so in the outlying districts of Scotland and Ireland, but also in other parts of the world. In case you should care to follow up the

mortar were always used for pounding wheat, and it was not until after 173 B.C., when baking was established as a separate occupation, that the quern, or simplest form of hand-mill, was introduced, and a little later the water-mill began to take its place. The latter soon became more common, but in those places which were too far away from them the quern still continued to hold its own for many centuries, and it is interesting to know that even now it has not altogether fallen into disuse.—A. F. D.

## SALMON MIGRATION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Since replying to my other critics my attention has been drawn to the interesting letter on the same subject from Mr. Eden at Venice. His theory is evidently that the salmon travel along the coast only, and do not venture far from it, and in support of his view states that fish are often caught in the coast nets far from any river. It would be very interesting if Mr. Eden could cite instances of salmon so caught at any great distance from the mouth of a river, especially if there caught in any large numbers. On the other hand, there is some considerable evidence, in the fact of salmon sometimes being taken far out to sea, against his view that they hug the coast constantly (I hope I am not misrepresenting his argument when I state it thus), and also in the fact that such a very large number of the salmon whose stomachs have

is thus within the conditions of that theory that it may be supposed they would encounter the stake nets along the coast.—HORACE G. HUTCHINSON.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The very interesting articles you have published lately on the theory of salmon migration lead me to hope that you may care to accept a suggestion from one who can lay no claim to the name of expert. It is simply this: that one of the long, narrow sea lochs on the West Coast of Scotland or Ireland should be fenced off with nets, and a small river running into it stocked with salmon; then the whole life history of the fish could be studied, and many vexed questions would be solved. At first glance this seems altogether impracticable, but there are many inlets on our western shores where it could be carried out at very little expense. One small bay I know is enclosed by two headlands not 100 yards apart, and the water is so shallow between them that an ordinary herring-net would reach the bottom in the deepest part of the channel. The only stream running into this bay is too small to admit of salmon spawning; this difficulty, however, might be overcome by placing a weir at the mouth, and one or two higher up, so as to form several reaches deep enough for salmon to disport themselves in. Of course it is too much to expect that the Government will take the matter up, but perhaps some magnanimous landowner, or an association of people interested in the



M. Emil Freckon.

HAND-MILL FIXED IN HOUSE.

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been examined have been found to have been feeding on herring. The proportion that are found to have this kind of food in their stomachs seems to be greater than would be at all likely if they only fed on the herring when the latter come close in shore, a condition which would seem to be required by acceptance of Mr. Eden's theory. The statement, before cited, of Sir J. Gibson Maitland regarding the movements of salmon going out to sea along the old river-bed of the Tweed, would also be against Mr. Eden's view. The argument from the migration of birds is, as has been said, suggestive merely, rather than possessing any real cogency, but at the same time it may be pointed out that Mr. Eden's view that the old birds lead the migration flight, although appearing so very probable *a priori*, is not in accordance with the observations of Herr Gatke at Heligoland and others who have had the opportunity and have cared to study the flight, for one of the most remarkable facts that such observations appear to have proved fully is that in the case of many kinds of birds they are the young ones, born in the same year, that are the pioneers of the flight—birds, therefore, that have not travelled the line before and have no experience, except of an inherited kind, to guide them. I do not presume that the theory of Sir Spencer Walpole, which I first enunciated, would find any difficulty in supposing that as the fish come near the mouths of the rivers they may scatter for several miles on either side of the estuary awaiting the spate, which certainly acts as an inducement to them to run up; and it

subject, may provide the necessary funds. There is even a possibility that the project might prove a financial success, for there can be no question that a vast number of extremely valuable fish are lost every year when they go down to the sea. By this method these, or a large proportion of them, might be saved; and if this were so, the owners of the fish pen would certainly reap a large profit. In any case our knowledge of the habits of salmon would be very greatly increased.—T. BRANDON.

## BACK TO THE LAND.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am the unfortunate possessor of eight or nine acres of land adjoining my little place in Herts. They lie on a southerly slope, well protected, with chalk subsoil, and about 1 ft. of very poor light topsoil. The land has been arable, and neglected, and has just been steam ploughed. It has only come into my possession this month, and there were reasons which compelled me to buy it. I have no farming appliances, though they could be hired, no doubt. I do not like to leave it uncultivated, and I should be pleased if I could make nett, say, £12 per annum on it. Is this an impossible ideal, and what do you advise? "Cropping" is rather awe-inspiring for an amateur. One thinks of potatoes, and has vague ideas of growing larch for poles, etc. Any suggestions will most thankfully be received.—BACK TO THE LAND.



SALMON FLIES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Referring to Mr. J. J. Hardy's interesting article on salmon flies, which appeared in your issue of the 23rd ult., kindly permit me to say that it would, I think, be a matter of great interest to anglers and amateur fly-dressers if Mr. Hardy would give the make-up of the flies which were pictured in his article, as one cannot learn much from anything but a coloured picture of a salmon fly unless the dressing is given. Should it be asking Mr. Hardy too much to go back upon what has already appeared, may I hope he will not omit the particulars I suggest in any future articles of a similar nature—and I trust they will be many—which may appear over his name.—MURRAY MACKENZIE, Gardville, Enniskean, County Cork.

[When the fishing volume of COUNTRY LIFE Library is published it will contain an illustration of these flies in the correct colourings, which is a sufficient guide for an intelligent fly-dresser to work from.—ED.]

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am by no means satisfied that the reason why salmon take lures, baits, etc., in fresh water is so easily settled as Mr. Reeves seems to think. I am not disposed to disagree with him on his argument as relating to purely spawning fish, and the fact that salmon may, during the time they are on the "redds," be seen fighting among themselves and chasing the smaller fry, and may so chase an artificial fly or minnow to their destruction; but this admission does not settle the question as to what *Salmo salar* is doing with the worm in his throat by which he is ignominiously brought to his end. Mr. Reeves says: "Salmon ascend rivers purely for the purpose of depositing their spawn in a place of safety." I am afraid I cannot subscribe to this, and must ask Mr. Reeves to tell me what the spring fish are ascending the rivers for in January, when they have no spawn to deposit? Again, why do these fish take fly, minnow, etc., seeing that they are not spawning and have no "redds" to protect?—JOHN JAMES HARDY, Alne Brae, Alnmouth, Northumberland.

## PHEASANTS CROSSING WATER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your article on shooting at Woolverstone Park you mention a very interesting point about the inability of pheasants to cross an estuary a mile and a quarter wide. I have seen grouse cross a much wider stretch of water when alarmed, and they take long flights from one side of a loch to the other, apparently for their own pleasure. On the other hand, I have observed that when a pheasant is dropped in water it is helpless, even though only winged.—R. M.

## GEESE ON PASTURE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can you or any of your readers give me some information about the keeping of geese? Beside my house I have a small field about half an acre in size. As it adjoins the lawn and garden I do not wish to fence it off, and I therefore cannot put a horse or

cow on it to eat the grass. At the same time, I want it eaten down to keep it neat, and I have been told that geese would do that nicely. There is a pond beside the field which would be convenient. What I want to know is if geese would do that, and how many would be required; also whether they are very troublesome, and would require much attention? No one about here keeps geese, and I shall be glad to have any information on the subject.—J. F. J.

## AN OLD COTTAGE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—While visiting Crowborough in Sussex during the autumn of last year, I came upon the little old cottage of which I am sending you a photograph, with particulars of its history, for your interesting paper. It goes by the name of "Little Grubbers." The owner, Mrs. Hoath, whose grandfather bought it in 1800, possesses "writings" relating to it as far back as the year 1660. It was built, like many others in the neighbourhood, for the use of the men who dug for iron ore, the iron industry being celebrated in and near Crowborough during the last few centuries. The cottage seems to be in good repair, and stands in a lovely position in the hamlet of St. John's, near Withyham, overlooking the beautiful Warren Moor.—E. WILLOUGHBY DARVELL.

## A JUMPING HORSE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—While the hunting season is still on, I send you a photograph which may possibly interest your equestrian readers. It is, as you will see, that of a good hunter taking a leap. The point to which I would draw attention is the position of his front legs. It is quite certain that before instantaneous photography came into use no painter would have thought of representing them in this position, and this is an example of the manner in which photography is influencing animal painting.—X.



## AN IRISH STILE.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—In case you should think it worthy of reproduction as an addition to Mr. Harris Stone's series of Irish stiles, I enclose a print of the entrance leading to the burial ground of the ancient church of Drum in the County Mayo. These two stiles and the coffin gate were built in the nineteenth century. The road leading to them is the very ancient Togherpatrick, which can be traced here and there through many miles

of country leading from church to church to the top of Croaghpatrick. This absolute block for vehicles is not so unreasonable as it looks. The entrance is at the foot of a slope so steep that no vehicle could go up it, and the church and graveyard are just on the top. The Togherpatrick went straight up, therefore the coffins must go straight up. This gate is all that is wanted, and there is no delay in getting the key or breaking the lock. It is so necessary to follow the usual path of funerals, that at the old church of Moyne, in the south of the county, near Headford, the procession leaves the road and passes through fields, throwing gaps where necessary in two or three cross walls, until it reaches the gate of the enclosure, which could be conveniently reached by a road going a little way round.—H. J. KNOX, Bilton, near Bristol.

